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Research Essay: Exploring stakeholder perceptions pertaining to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy

By

Phenyo Gasebonoe

(201304145)

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Doctor Corne Davis

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In 2013 I came to Johannesburg to pursue a higher learning education at the University of Johannesburg. I have since obtained two degrees with hopes of completing my third with the submission of this dissertation.

Over the years I have expanded and stretched myself to heights I didn't know were possible for someone like me. Like many black South Africa students across the country, I am the first in my family to have the privilege to go to University. Today, I submit my Masters Dissertation, but I spare a thought to all my brothers and sisters who are to this day denied access to free decolonised higher education.

A lot Grace, hard word and sacrifice has gotten me here and it would be a lie to say I did it alone. I would like to thank the divine energies that continue to conspire the universe in attainment of my hearts desires. I am led and guided my God, and for that I am forever grateful.

Secondly, my deepest gratitude to my research supervisor Dr Corne Davis. Your willingness to share your skills, knowledge, and expertise moved me deeply. I will forever be grateful. Thank you to David Davis for your guidance and assistance on the quantitative analysis of the study.

To my friends and family, who continue to show me that love in its truest and finest form liberates. If it was not for your support and prayers I would have probably given up.

I chose this topic because I somehow wanted my two passions of social justice and business to be infused into one. I have just scratched the service with this contribution, and I will continue in all my pursuits to ensure that business becomes the catalyst for meaningful change.

This is just a start of my journey to live out the truest and highest expression of my being. I vouch to continue to use any platform given and my talents to change the world for good. I have crafted the highest grandest vision for my life and I am working in the vision day by day.

Wow! I am indeed my ancestor's wildest dreams.

THIS IS IT!!!

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to explore stakeholder perceptions relating to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy. A case study methodological orientation was adopted as the base of this study and MTN Group was chosen as sample and population due to the fact that it was declared one of the largest telecommunication organisation in Africa. This research takes the course of documentation study meaning the use of multiple data collection techniques and sources strengthens the credibility of outcomes and enables different interpretations and meanings are to be included in the data analysis. The findings gathered from data collected are analysed using both qualitative and quantitative content analysis.

The rise in digital technologies such as the Internet and hypertext has had an impact on nearly every industry, field, and topic in the world. Its effects can be seen in the norms, communication patterns, and social cultures that surround these industries, fields, and topics.

This study shows that the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has evolved significantly over the past three decades and, at present, is characterised, primarily, by its human-centredness and the creation of shared value (CSV). Recent years have seen an increase in the expectations from society for organisations to promote its well-being as well as to adopt a "higher level of consciousness", commit to a higher purpose and contribute meaningfully towards making a real difference in the world (Trendwatching, 2015; Mackay, 2011:83) by fulfilling social and environmental obligations. We have seen this displayed in movements such as the #DataMustFall activist who are requesting telecommunication organisations to reduce the cost of mobile data so they can access the internet to fully participate in the digital economy.

Against this background, the study employs the reflective paradigm as meta-theoretical perspective, as well as the paradigms of strategic communication, the creation of shared value, the virtuous organisation and micro corporate social responsibility (micro-CSR) as the theoretical frameworks to highlight the necessity for organisations to fulfil social and environmental expectations. Moreover, these frameworks are used to position #DataMustFall and the issue of access to the internet as an issue of shared value the private sector should address.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this Minor Dissertation submitted for the degree MA (Coursework) Strategic Communication at the University of Johannesburg is my own work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree at another university or higher education institution.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Major forces such as globalisation that come with global networks of trade, capital flows, and spread of technology and global media. The result is the digital network revolution that subsequently produces the empowerment of a myriad of new stakeholders, leading to a shift in how organisations self-define and how they see their role in society. Furthermore, this focus on individual and organisational performance is concerned with situations that foster and enable virtuous behaviours that is not only influencing the development of organisational studies but is also starting to have an impact on business ethics (Meyer, 2015:175), and specifically on virtue ethics (Ferrero & Sison, 2014). Hence the "virtuous organisation", as described by Collier (1995), has not only reconceptualised business ethics but has also promulgated expectations, such as the "reflective responsibility in business" (Stahl, 2005:117).

These new forms of organising that are rooted in "virtuousness" or "doing good" challenge traditional assumptions related to the traditional concept of organisation which is based on notions such as capitalist business models, functional differentiation, hierarchy and bureaucracy, to mention a few (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). As a backlash, there is a growing resistance to transnational brands and corporate globalisation. In other words, this is to say an expectation economy emerges as a business context, in this regard the expectation economy refers to the environment in which organisations are forced to operate according to the expectations of experienced consumers who are well-informed, perceptive, and demand that the product and service standards of brands deliver beyond their expectations (Trendwatching, 2008). Stakeholder pressures drive this expectation economy and by the means of information sharing on the internet that has empowered stakeholder activism and these activists have the power to change the organisation stakeholder dynamic to the internet when used effectively (Ingleton, Ozler & Thomas, 2011). Coombs (1998: 289) argues that the ease of information sharing on the internet has also empowered consumers as activists, meaning that activists have a new weapon that can change the organisations stakeholder dynamic to the internet when used effectively.

1.2 THEORETICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

According to Mintz (2016) the surge of brand activism we have seen in the past few years has been decades in the making, this is due to the rise of social media, the rise of citizen journalism, and almost near-universal access to publishing tools. The same tools range from giving brands the opportunity to drive issue conversation to more traditional advocacy voices. Increasingly, brands aim to nurture customer relationships that are lifelong and sustainable, and that are built not just on product features but also on shared cultural values. Online digital activism is made possible by the development of interactive technologies, has transformed political protests in the last two decades smartphones and the Internet have changed the way political events, protests and movements are organised, helping to mobilise thousands of new supporters of a diverse range of causes (Karatzogianni, 2016). These new technologies often bypass the existing world of politics, social movements and campaigning. Instead, they take advantage of new technologies to provide an alternative way of organising society and the economy.

In managing issues, the organisation presents issues to stakeholders through narratives of value, policy or fact to gain support for the issue and to maintain stakeholder relationships through addressing these issues that affect all stakeholders (Heath, 2006:90-91). This has created a blurring of genres within the communication disciplines such as public relations (PR), marketing and corporate communications, and has also redefined the role of the communication professionals within their organisations and society. Such fundamental changes require business, scholars and communication practitioners to challenge their own assumptions and consider the implications of these paradigm shifts in their respective organisations (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). "This also means that in these redefined roles they must act virtuously, and based on personal values, have a conception of good that they identify with, and work towards. The redefined roles are also informed by personal purpose which is accepted by and aligned with the higher organisational purpose and general professional values" (Harrison & Galloway, 2005). It is also evident in emerging trends among scholars within the field of Business Ethics which include positive organisational scholarship (POS), a new, fast-developing field of research focussing on "that which leads to the development of human strength, resilience, healing and flourishing (Meyer, 2015:175). It also centres on the understanding that there is a universal desire to improve the human condition and that the capacity to do so is latent in most systems (Cameron, 2003: 11).

Porter and Kramer (2011:76-77) propose the creation of shared value (CSV) as a strategic sustainable approach to leading social progress whilst serving the self-interest of organisations and gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the community (Porter & Kramer, 2011:76-77). Thereby, businesses must strive to achieve economic progress whilst concurrently improving the social and economic conditions of their surrounding communities (Dezso, 2013:7). Firms must acknowledge that their ability to thrive is closely intertwined with the health of the communities in which they operate due to the ability of social needs to shape markets and the internal costs that social weaknesses impose on organisations (Porter & Kramer, 2011:65-66). There is a remarkable shift within business that expands, and even totally disregards, the dominant traditional business philosophy of capitalism at times. Against this background, the research question is as follows: What are the stakeholder perceptions of MTN's online response to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy? The reason MTN Group was chosen as a case study is because it is one of the dominant players within the telecommunications sector in South Africa. The latest research by P3 Communications shows that MTN has the best network in South Africa, outperforming its rivals in telephony and data services (Mybroadband, 2018), hence the reason MTN is the focus case of this research. The #DataMustFall movement in South Africa is a highly topical issue in the public domain and affects the political, economic and social dynamics of the country. The #DataMustFall movements have also garnered support from other institutions such as the South African Federation of Trade Unions says it supports the #DataMustFall pickets. Activist efforts by this movement have proven to have some direct and indirect impact in the Telecommunication sector and is in one way or another impacting how business in done in this sector.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to Castellanos (2008) a research problem is a statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or in practice that points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation. In some social science disciplines the research problem is typically posed in the form of a question. A research problem does not state how to do something, offer a vague or broad proposition, or present a value question.

The problem statement of this study is as follows: "To explore the stakeholder perceptions pertaining to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy". This study focuses on MTN Group's Twitter account as a case study in order to establish perceptions relating to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy.

1.3.1 Outline and scope of the study

The outline and scope of the study articulates the research objectives, identifies the research objectives and methodology, and preview of the research design as introduction to the methodology and findings chapters that follow later.

1.3.2 Research objectives

Based on the research questions, the research objectives to be investigated in this study are as follows:

- To establish stakeholder reactions to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy.

- To establish how MTN Group adopts the principles of the reflective paradigm.
- To establish how MTN Group responds to stakeholder activism.
- To ascertain how MTN Group practices corporate social responsibility and shared value.

1.3.3 Research questions

The research question of the study is as follows: "What are stakeholders' perceptions pertaining to MTN's online responses in the #DataMustFall" controversy?"

1.3.4 Research sub-questions

Sub questions are narrower questions that answer research questions. The research sub-questions raised to answer the research problem above are as follows:

- What are stakeholder perceptions of MTN's online narratives relating to stakeholder activism as a response strategy in the #DataMustFall controversy on Facebook and Twitter?
- What are stakeholder perceptions of MTN's responses to activists' communication on social media platforms such as Twitter?
- What principles are MTN using to guide its online narratives relating to stakeholder activism as a response strategy in the #DataMustFall controversy?

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLGY

The discussion in this chapter commences with an overview of the methodology employed in this research study, including the application and discussion of the following concepts: research problem, research questions, research aims, theoretical statements, methodological orientation, population and sampling, research design, data collection and analysis, reliability, validity, and ethical considerations.

1.4.1 Population and Sampling

According to Omona (2013), sampling, as it relates to research, refers to the selection of individuals, units, and/or settings to be studied. Whereas quantitative studies strive for random sampling, qualitative studies often use purposeful or criterion-based sampling; that is, a sample that has the characteristics relevant to the research question.

If the researcher only wants to study one single thing (for example one organisation within a certain industry) or a single group (for example a group of people), a single case study is the best choice (Yin, 2003). This leads into the chosen sample of the research, which is MTN Group (which in an entity in the broader industry of telecommunications). The reason is that this is one of the key role players within the telecommunications sector in South Africa. This is supported by the latest research by P3 Communications shows that MTN has the best network in South Africa, outperforming its rivals in telephony and data services (Mybroadband, 2018). Furthermore, the study will look at documentation analysis and therefore does not require purposive or non-probability sampling (the section will be covered in more details under the data analysis section).

1.4.2 Data Collection

This research study in based on Case Study methodology. In Case study research typically includes multiple data collection techniques and data are collected from multiple sources. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations (direct and participant), questionnaires, and relevant documents (Yin, 2014) and patterns can be uncovered.

It is important to note that the study set out to find out online perceptions of stakeholders; this means documentation/social media commentary for the one-year period from 1 September 2016 to the 31 September 2017. The Documents and commentary from various sources such as ICASA, MTN Group, Right2Know campaign, media articles and social media commentary will be collated and analysed. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 35), documentary analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings that may be revealed by their style and coverage. This is particularly useful where the history of events or experiences has relevance and where events cannot be studied by direct observation or interviewing (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 35).

1.4.3 Data Analysis

An in-depth discussion of the empirical findings of the research study in relation to the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The findings will be interpreted whereby the ability to answer the research sub-questions and research question will then be ascertained. Methodological limitations, future recommendations as well as the original contribution of the study will also be discussed.

According to Yin (2003: 111-115) there are three general analytic strategies for analysing case study evidence these include; relying on theoretical propositions, thinking about rival explanations, and developing a case description. Yin (2003) also contends that these strategies can be used in practicing five specific techniques for analysing case studies. The techniques include: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models and cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2003: 109, 116-137).This study will employ content analysis as the dominant data analysis methods that will be used. Stake (2000: 436) notes that a "case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry", namely the report. Content analysis can be carried out quantitatively but also qualitatively. For the purposes of this research we focus on both quantitative content analysis and qualitative content analysis.

The following are the set of mass media documents (freely available to the public) that will be analysed using qualitative content analysis; external documents from MTN Group (press releases and submission papers to the competition commission), and Online newspaper articles relating to #DataMustFall. Zhang and Wildemath (2009: 319) state that qualitative content analysis pays attention to unique themes that illustrate the range of the meanings of the phenomena rather than the statistical significance of the occurrence of particular texts or concepts. In other words, qualitative content analysis is used to explore and identify themes and patterns embedded in a particular text or data sets.

1.4.4 Credibility, trustworthiness and confirmability

The verification or trustworthiness of the research findings will consist of validity and reliability of the data set. Reliability consists of the degree to which the research conducted can yield an identical set of results if replicated (Bloor & Wood, 2006: 2). According to Bloor & Wood (2006: 2) the validity of a data set consists of the degree to which the research "produces an accurate version of the world". The trustworthiness of qualitative data is often tested through the following representations: credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability and authenticity (Elo, et al, 2014: 1).

1.4.5 Ethical Considerations

Case study research must also effectively communicate the confidential nature of the research and take extra precautions to ensure participants' right to privacy – which can be particularly challenging when only one case is the focal point of research (for example, a city's social programme) (Stake, 2000).

Because documentation study will be used, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 285-286) recommend the following:

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If the author of the document is still alive, they may ask that we read the entire document and give an auto critique.

It is sometimes possible to compare the relevant document with other written documents or data collected in other ways.

1.4.6 Limitations of study

The limitations of a study refer to those factors of the research study that will hinder the research process and the possible replicability of the research study (Wiid & Diggines, 2009:101). This study is limited to #DataMustFall hashtag and uses MTN as a case study over a 12 month period (01 September 2016 – 31 October 2017). Although the results can be transferred to value-creating practices of social media based brand communities in South Africa, the results can be affected by the rapidly changing digital and social landscapes.

1.4.7 Exposition of the study

The chapter flow diagram in Figure 1.1 below illustrates the flow of the content and argumentation in this study:

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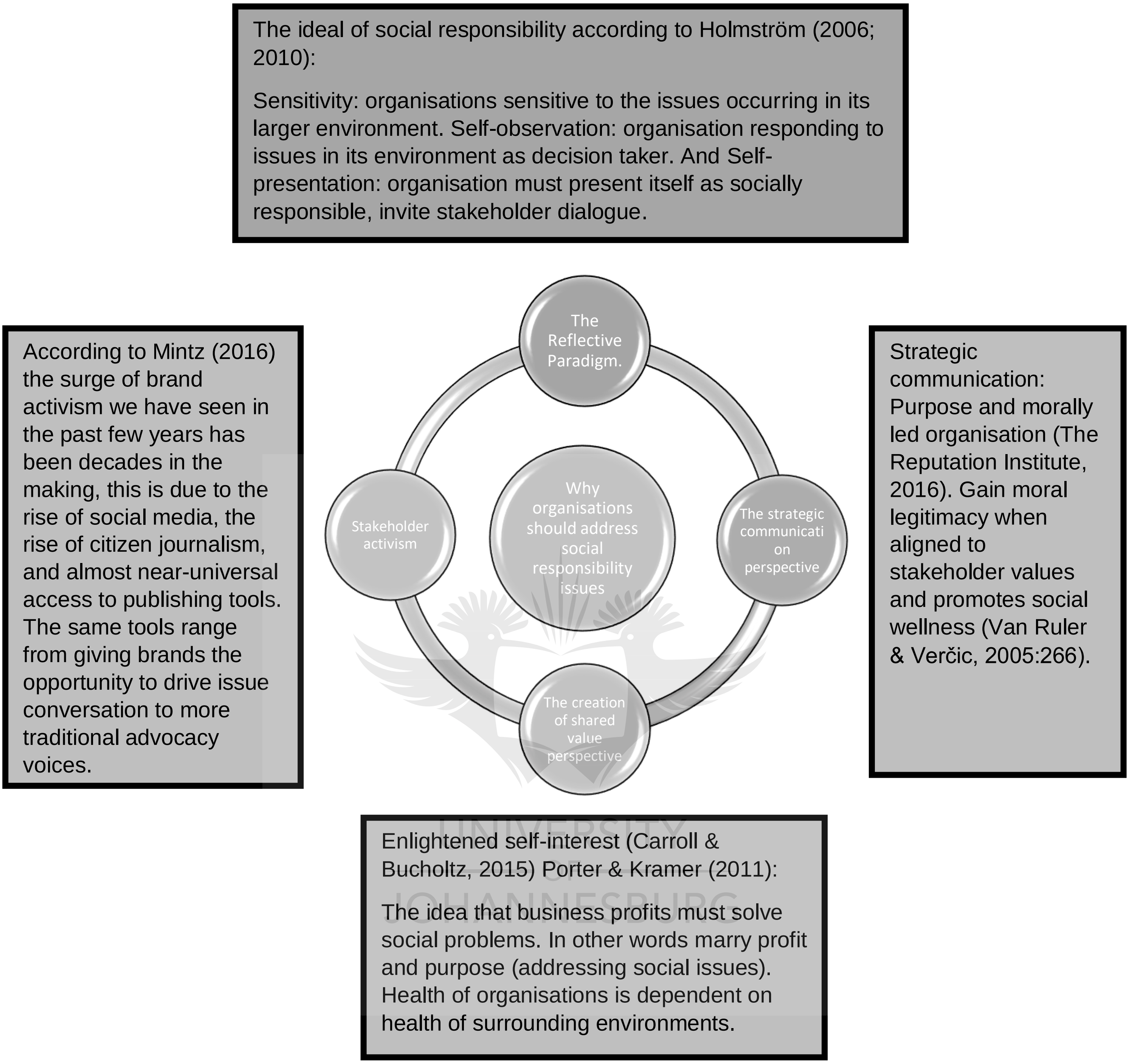

Figure 1.1: A chapter flow diagram of the content and arguments presented in this study

The section below articulates the approach of the study in so far as ontological, epistemological and philosophical orientations of this study.

1.4.8 Approach of the study

This study's approach can be described in terms of the ontological, epistemological and philosophical assumptions that inform the selection of its content. As Neher (1997:25) states it is really not possible for people to begin serious academic study in a field without some assumptions that shape the way they think about what they are studying. These basic assumptions lead to a perspective, a point of view. The perspective is important in determining the kind of observations they make and the kind of conclusions they come to. Our beliefs about reality lead to decisions concerning what to look for and what to count as evidence. It is therefore imperative to articulate the specific assumptions that guide the inquiry in this study.

1.4.9 Ontological Orientation

According to Cooper and White (2012) ontological assumptions enable the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of the world, enhance their findings and establish their own worldview through paying attention to the multiple subjective views put forward by the research participants. Broadly speaking, the three distinct ontological positions identified are realism, idealism and materialism (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Realism claims that there is an external reality independent of what people may think or understand it to be, whereas idealism maintains that reality can only be understood through the human mind and socially constructed meanings (Bergin, 2017: 5). Similar to realism, materialism also claims that there is a real world but it is only the material or physical world that is considered to be real. Other phenomena, for instance, beliefs, values or experiences arise from the material world but do not shape it.

For this study, the ontological orientation is that of idealist. In this ontological orientation, reality is regarded as constructed by the human mind (Blaikie, 2009:93) with different realities representing different perspectives of the external world. As such, social reality is a culmination of the shared interpretations reproduced in and through the reproduction of social actors' interpretations, the culmination of which is the external world. In conducting the research, the researcher acknowledges that the organisational realities reported on by the various participants and sources are congruent with their experiences. The social reality reported on by the researcher is thus reflective of the multiple subjective interpretations that participants have constructed within their organisations (Maggetti et al., 2013:7).

1.4.10 Epistemological orientation

The epistemological orientation refers to the assumptions concerned with "what kinds of knowledge are possible" (Blaikie, 2009:92). The knowledge can be known and the criteria applied to the particular topic under study (Maggetti, Gilardi & Radaelli, 2012:7), which ascertains whether this knowledge is adequate or legitimate. Bergin (2017) argues that epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge and ways of knowing and learning about social reality. There are two main perspectives for "knowing" these are positivism and interpretivism. Constructivism and

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naturalistic are terms commonly referred to in the literature and sometimes in an inconsistent way for interpretivism (Guba & Lincoln 1994). The term constructivism is helpful because it identifies the basic principle that reality is socially constructed; a relativist position that holds the view that there is no external reality independent of human consciousness (Robson 2002). Baxter and Jack (2010) state that “Constructivists claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one’s perspective”. In other words, for a constructivist researcher despite being aware of his or her own accumulated knowledge, past experiences and biases and how these influence the observations in the research inquiry, the researcher seeks to preserve the authenticity of the subjective interpretations of the social actors yet acknowledges that a completely unbiased account thereof is impossible.

Blaikie (2007:1) identified six different types of epistemology for consideration in social scientific investigation, namely empiricism, rationalism, constructionism, falsificationism, neorealism and conventionalism. The constructionist orientation is associated with idealist ontology, as argued later in this chapter. Blaikie (2007:22) makes a further differentiation between constructivism and social constructionism. The former is also known as radical constructivism, which refers to the meaning-giving activities of the human mind and thus to cognitive processes, while the latter refers to the intersubjective creation of knowledge and the creation of meaning that is social rather than individual. The focus of social constructionism is therefore on the co-creation of meaning, as it is considered in this study.

1.4.11 Philosophical orientation

The philosophical orientation discussed in this section identifies the fundamental epistemological and ontological assumptions that underlie the theoretical arguments presented in this study. Given that the emphasis here is on theoretical and conceptual development, axiological orientations are not considered. The research strategy of this study takes the form of case study research (to be discussed in detail in the following section). Case study research has a practical versatility in its agnostic approach whereby "it is not assigned to a fixed ontological, epistemological or methodological position" (Rosenberg & Yates, 2007: 447).

Philosophically, case study research can be orientated from a realist or positivist perspective where the researcher holds the view that there is one reality, which is independent of the individual and can be studied and measured through to a relativist or interpretivist perspective. A relativist or interpretivist perspective adopts the premise that multiple realities and meanings exist, which depend on and are co-created by the researcher (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011; Yin, 2014). Starman (2013: 30) also states that for interpretivism, the subjective views of a researcher on a particular situation play a vital part in the study results. The interpretative paradigm, phenomenological approach and constructivism as a paradigmatic basis of qualitative research are closely linked to the definition and characteristics of case studies. A case study is therefore more qualitative than quantitative in nature, but not exclusively, for it can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both approaches (with both represented equally or one approach prevailing and the other supplementing). Qualitative and quantitative results should complement each other to create a meaningful whole according to the object and purpose of the investigation (Sagadin 2004: 89).

The outline of the study is as follows:

Chapter 2: A reflective perspective on social responsibility

This chapter focuses on the reflective paradigm the meta-theoretical perspective adopted in this study. With its focus on the relationships between organisations and all stakeholders the key concepts pertaining to social responsibility unpacked in this chapter are sensitivity, self-observation and self-presentation. Another focus in this chapter is on the emerging paradigm of strategic communication to show how the conceptual evolution of corporate social responsibility has reframed concepts such as organisational purpose, stakeholder expectations around socially conscious organisational behaviour, organisational legitimacy and other related concepts to sketch the context for the discussion on creating shared value, ethics, and employee engagement in social responsibility.

Chapter 3: The emerging paradigm of strategic communication

The adoption of the reflective paradigm that has influenced the emerging discipline of strategic communication requires organisations to be "reflective" and "strategic" in their organisational strategies. The section below will delve deeper into the emerging paradigm of strategic communication, key drivers and trends as well as a brief look into the practice of strategic communication. This chapter also delves into the concepts such as "socially conscious organisations" and ethics as a basis for organisations to focus their social role.

Chapter 4: The evolution of stakeholder theory: a focus on stakeholder activism

An understanding of the stakeholder concept, stakeholder relationships, stakeholder engagement, governance, issues management, and crisis management/conflict resolution and reputation management is required and therefore the focus of the below chapter. The section below briefly delves into Stakeholder theory, with particular focus on stakeholder activism and broadly into stakeholder expectations and the impact they have on organisations in the current business context. For this study, activists groups as an integral stakeholder group for organisations will be explored in more detail.

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Chapter 5: Methodology

The discussion in this chapter commences with an overview of the methodology employed in this research study, including the application and discussion of the following concepts: research problem, research questions, research aims, theoretical statements, methodological orientation, population and sampling, research design, data collection and analysis, reliability, validity, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 6: Findings and Interpretation

An in-depth discussion of the empirical findings of the research study in relation to the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The findings will be interpreted whereby the ability to answer the research sub-questions and research question will then be ascertained. Methodological limitations, future recommendations as well as the original contribution of the study will also be discussed.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter aims to illustrate how the research aims were achieved and how the research question and sub-questions have been answered. It concludes with specific recommendations for further research and for industry.

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CHAPTER 2

A REFLECTIVE PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Commercial enterprises and business organisations today face an increasing number of additional economic-related challenges in order to sustain profitable margins. These challenges are partly due to the development of web 2.0 technologies, as stated by Overton, De Klerk & Verwey (2013). Thomson (2018) further concedes that Web 2.0 is the tag used to describe a variety of web-sites and web-applications that allow anyone to develop and share online information or material. A key element of the relevant technology is that it allows people to create, share, collaborate and communicate with the objective of identifying solutions to problems.

Additionally, this development is analysed as a learning process that is part of society's self-maintaining dynamics. Society adjusts itself through evolution of changing forms of social co-ordination (Holmström, 2002). This has led to a poly-contextual form of regulation, which supplements or replaces conventional linear regulations into more flexible forms of traditional regulation. This evolution leads to increased intensity and complexity in corporate relations, and consequently to growing importance for corporate communication used for public relations. These evolutionary processes are essential to understanding public relations and corporate communication.

The reflective paradigm, as developed by Holmström (2002; 2006), identifies organisations as social systems and calls for businesses to adjust their boundaries of responsibility in line with greater societal expectations, and thereby to consciously reflect on their responsibilities towards society. The upholding of social responsibilities is considered a means through which society is able to secure its own survival, which has evolved in line with the co-evolution of organisations and society (Holmström, 2002). Given the context of this study, the reflective paradigm is considered most suitable as the meta-theoretical framework. Holmström (2002:13; 2006:2-7) argues that organisations carrying out the act of reflection is the ideal of social responsibility. This takes place through the functions of sensitivity (treating their environments with respect); self-observation (understanding their responsibilities towards society) and self-presentation (presenting themselves as ethical and inviting stakeholder dialogue). These functions will be discussed in detail in this chapter, within the frame of systems theory, which is the foundation of the reflective paradigm. The arguments presented in this chapter aim to discuss the reflective paradigm in depth to show how organisations recognise that their growth is not independent of their environments. Instead, they are interdependent insofar as the multiple bottom lines of the organisations and their stakeholders and the fulfilment of these goals are reliant on mutual resources (Holmström, 2007:258 & Lawler, 2014).

2.2 THE REFLECTIVE PARADIGM - A META-THEORETICAL APPROACH TO THE STUDY

A theory on reflection as the ideal of organisational legitimisation has been developed by Holmström (1997, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005). This theory involves analyses of the co-evolution of society and the organisation, and identifies reflection as an enlightened poly-contextual second-order worldview as opposed to the mono-contextual first-order worldview of reflexivity. The theory is based on the theories of sociologist Niklas Luhmann. Luhmann describes the dynamics of the social filters through which our perceptions of reality are constructed, for example, how meaning is produced. These so-called filters are constituted by continuous self-referential selection processes and communication (Baecker, 2001; Luhmann, 1984/1995:4). These processes are guided solely by their own horizon of meaning, not the intentions and hermeneutic capacities of a communicating subject (Luhmann, 1990). His focus was on the communicative filters of social systems through which the world is recognised. Every social contact is understood as a system "up to and including society as the inclusion of all possible contacts" (Luhmann, 1995: 15). Luhmann argued that a system can observe other systems that perceive the world from quite different perspectives and that its own worldview is contingent, not natural or necessary, but could be different (Luhmann, 1984/1995:106). Luhmann (2002: 103) proposed that 'a system [that] can observe [and] may have the capacity to observe itself' meaning that for this self-observation to take place the system must distinguish itself from its environment and thereby must perform self-reference as well as an external reference of its environment. Luhmann's approach, however, turns traditional notions of systems upside down in relation to machine metaphors as well as to teleological thinking, and conservative, legitimising or functionalist ideologies. It is presented within a 'recursive universe' characterised by disorder and non-linear complexity. Systems rationality is about establishing structures of expectation in an otherwise infinite, immense world by reducing complexity and thus rendering probable communication. Luhmann's work lays the foundation for the meta-theory, which is a reflective paradigm discussed below.

2.3 THE SHIFT FROM REFLEXIVITY TO REFLECTION

As discussed by Holmström, the late 1900s saw an evolution in the perception of legitimacy and in the legitimising practices of organisations. Contemporary ideals such as social responsibility, dialogue and symmetrical communication can be seen as responses to the challenges of modernisation and globalisation. These ideals mark the shift from first order to second order perspectives, from reflexivity to reflection, an evolutionary learning process that occurred in specific stages during the latter half of the 20th century. The conditionality of an observation and the difference between the first order observations and second order observation is characterised as reflexivity and second order observation of reflection become decisive (Luhmann, 1991/1993:12). The difference between a mono-contextual and poly-contextual worldview is illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 2.1: The difference between mono-contextual perspective (Reflexivity) and poly-contextual perspective (Reflective) (Holmström, 2003).

The figure above displays two drawings, drawing one on the left, illustrates the mono-contextual worldview. The system (A) sees only its own worldview (the truth, the reality) and conflicts blindly with other worldviews, even though (or exactly because) the ideal of consensus prevails: the differences in the larger context are not seen. Drawing two on the right, indicates how the perspective rises so that the system can see how it sees itself and the world. The drawing is misleading in the sense that observation cannot take place from outside the system; it is a result of a re-entry of the boundary between system and environment within the system. The intention, however, is to illustrate three important things. The perspective changes from mono-contextual blindness to poly-contextual blindness, and it can be seen how poly-contextuality continues to rest within mono-contextuality.

Furthermore, reflexivity implies a mono-contextual, narcissistic perspective from within, from where the organisation takes its own worldview as a given, takes what it sees as the one reality, the only truth and consequently conflicts blindly with different worldviews. In reflection, the perspective rises to a higher level, which facilitates a poly-contextual worldview. Additionally, Holmström (2007: 4) states that in petrifaction of modernity, we may see reflection as a reaction to the blind side-effects of reflexivity. An organisation applying the narrow perspective of reflexivity is insensitive to the broader context and consequently to the unintended, often far-reaching side effects of its decisions.

In contrast, reflection exposes the contingent nature of social processes: the reflective organisation acknowledges the responsibility of decision-taking. Second, with regard to the conflict between independence and interdependence of functional systems, reflection implies a poly-contextual perception of the environment. This entails self-restriction of an organisation out of consideration for other relevant systems in order to secure its own existence in the long term. Third with regard to political regulation, reflection means that the usual conceptions of autonomy and regulation as opposites are turned upside down. Based on Luhmann's theory on organisations as observing communication systems, the implications of reflective as opposed to reflexive practices are identified in three closely interrelated operations within organisations (Holmström: 2004).

Reflection means; the social system is able to relate to itself and its perspective and its worldview, instead of being guided by it blindly. In reflection, the perspective rises from a mono-contextual first-order perspective to a poly-contextual second-order perspective. This is to say that instead of seeing the world mono-contextually, self-centred and from a perspective enclosed within the system, the social system observes its own and others' behaviour based on an understanding partly of itself as a specific. It is about the independent dynamic which is part of a larger poly-contextual, interdependent network, and partly of the socio-diversity's function in the processing of complexity of modern societies. So, reflection implies that the social system, on one hand, understands its specific identity as part of the socio-diversity, and retains and develops its independence; and, on the other hand, learns to understand its interdependence in the larger societal context and develops restrictions and coordinating mechanisms to other societal spheres.

These dynamics lead to understanding the transformations that lead to new expectations of business as an evolutionary process, which can be analytically split into successive stages, each having their specific corporate practice. The process starts with defensive counter-action, gradually provoking resource-demanding and risk-reflective corporate practice. And over time the organisation relieves itself in good practice and finally stabilises in a new convention and new structures of expectation that generate the amount of trust necessary to maintain social order (Luhmann 1968).

2.4 KEY CONCEPTS OF THE REFLECTIVE PARADIGM

According to Holmström (2005: 6), the reflective paradigm refers to the counter-concepts that represent the different ways an organisation (or another social system) observes itself and the world that seem to be a key to understanding corporate social responsibility. Holmström, Falkheimer and Nielsen (2010) also note that as a result of the reflective paradigm the organisation self-examines itself in the larger societal system, and sees the interdependence within the socio-diversity of that system (society). Therefore, reflection is the production of profound self-understanding in relation to the environment in which the organisation exists. This means, on the one hand, the organisation clarifies and strengthens its specific independent identity and, on the other, it develops restrictions and coordinating tools in its decision-making processes in recognition of societal interdependence (Holmström: 2002).

Once the interdependence is fully realised, Holmström (2002:14) states that "gradually there is a change that 'takes place in the business' approach, companies attach increasing importance to broader social responsibility as they experience a relationship between economic success and social and environmental considerations, which leads to reflection". Sell and Miles (2014: 4) argue that reflecting core societal dynamics is essential for organisational growth, stating that organisations that really want to get ahead in the postmodern context need to anticipate how society is moving and evolving. Holmström (2002: 2) also states that when organisations understand society as consisting not of human beings, but of social systems connecting people, they are analytically able to reconstruct society into a 'map' of communication circuits, continually reproducing their own specific 'reality'. Society is increasingly differentiated into incompatible logics in social systems (Holmström, 2002).

The reflective paradigm underscores partnerships and collaboration suggesting that the various social systems must culminate in strategic partnerships to maintain the common good of society. Holmström (2002:17) notes that recognition of this interdependence is a prerequisite for these social systems to achieve success in their own capacities. In this instance, social responsibility is a self-referential, voluntary action where the socially responsible organisation is regarded as more competitive in the market. The recognition that Holmström talks about is the recognition that the social responsibility interests of investors, consumers, suppliers and other stakeholders, such as activists, need to be closely observed (Holmström, 2002:18). In contrast to organisations being forced to undertake socially responsible activities through legislation and protest action by activists as evidenced in the counter-active phase. In other words, in partnering with strategic stakeholders, organisations are able to manage societal demands proactively as opposed to being reactive to its demands. Partnerships or co-operation can help businesses to improve their performance and reduce risks; the benefit for stakeholders is that businesses become part of the solution and not the problem (Holmström, 2003:18).

Moreover, in reflecting, organisations proactively engage society and their environments on issues of moral concern through meaningful dialogue. This has led to the adoption of policies and practices, corporate citizenship and codes of conduct, for example, in order to fulfil organisations' social responsibilities (Holmström, 2002:18). The fulfilment of social responsibilities is primarily regarded as equally important rather than mutually exclusive from attaining economic success. In reflecting, organisations adopt their own themes of social responsibility where these themes become integrated into core management and decision-making functions. In essence, the functional boundaries of organisations in this phase are determined by voluntary socially responsible practices that are economically rewarding for the organisation (Holmström, 2002:18).

In the development of the reflective paradigm, Holmström (2002:13; 2006:2) advocates for the purpose-driven organisation to assume the role of social actor by consciously reflecting on its responsibilities towards society and the broader environment in which it operates, where the ability to reflect is regarded as the ideal of social responsibility (Holmström, 2006:7). Stahl (2007:127) thus proposes that reflective responsibility be considered a 'meta-responsibility' in that it allows for individual interdependent responsibilities of respective stakeholders. Collier (2005:3-6) elaborates that businesses are required to assume responsibility for their future actions, transform the meaning of markets and business, commit to values and ethics that promote a sustainable future, uphold human rights and eliminate human suffering – as the market itself will not uphold these responsibilities. Stahl (2005:125) adds that reflective responsibility requires that the facts of the situation, underlying norms and the concept of responsibility are clearly defined. This places emphasis on action that drives effectiveness and improvement of circumstances over perfection and requires consideration of the outcomes of actions and whether desired results are attainable and norms governing the situation are reasonable.

2.5 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE REFLECTIVE PARADIGM

A study by Ernst & Young and Boston College Centre for Corporate Citizenship (2016) indicates that the role of business in society continues to be an ongoing debate in public discourse due to issues such as human rights, pollution and climate change, and therefore prompts a greater need for sustainability, transparency and responsibility in business. To keep organisations accountable, a sustainability reporting mechanism has been put in place. The benefits of sustainability reporting for organisations serve as a point of distinction within competitive industries, they may enable the organisation to access capital, improve its reputation, inspire trust and confidence, and employee and stakeholder loyalty (Ernst & Young & Boston College Centre for Corporate Citizenship, 2016).

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Porter (in Porter & Sandel,2013) emphasises that non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), governments and philanthropy have traditionally been mobilised to address social problems; however, in recent years organisations have been expected to also champion social issues. One way in which organisations have traditionally addressed sustainability issues is through corporate social responsibility practices. The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a theoretical framework for enterprises, according to the shared assumption that the economy has to consider some social and ethical aspects in their businesses, especially the value of the environment and the expectations of stakeholders. In this approach, it is possible to link CSR with other research fields, such as the "well-being economy", the theory of information and overcoming "utilitarianism" in the economy (Ceccacci & Lucentini, 2003).

It is important to note that arguments around the social responsibilities of business have evolved substantially and with the development of the reflective paradigm have ushered in a new wave of CSR. In contrast to the limited perspective of Friedman (1970) who argued that the primary social responsibility of business was to make profit, CSR offers a philosophical orientation for organisations to consider when balancing the needs of their multiple stakeholders, this gives them the social legitimacy to operate. There is no consensus on the definition of CSR (Chen & Fan, 2011; Rexhepi, Kurtishi, & Bexheti, 2013) in spite of the flood of research studies conducted in recent years. The content and frequency analysis of 37 definitions of CSR revealed that most of the often cited definitions of CSR have common aspects that can be categorised into five dimensions: the environmental dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension, the stakeholder dimension and the voluntariness dimension (Dahlsrud, 2008). There is no doubt that the expectations regarding the social responsibility of organisations have evolved significantly, as observed in most recent literature. For example, Bowen (1953) viewed the social responsibilities of business as the adoption of policies and actions that align with the values and objectives found to be favourable by society. Social responsibility was regarded by Friedman (1970) as going against the ideals of a free market, which promoted the growth of profits; while corporate executives would not be deemed as acting principally on behalf of their organisations but in their own capacities, as they would be "spending someone else's money for a general social interest".

First, the role of CSR as a societal and not just a social issue was underlined (European-Parliament, 2003) and was regarded as supplementing conventional regulation, not supplanting it (as would be the case with a return to liberalism). Corporate social responsibility (CSR1) in this regard offered a philosophical orientation for organisations to consider when balancing the needs of their stakeholders. This could be achieved by not only focusing on the organisation's profits but also by appearing to advance some social good by advocating for a particular social issue (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001:117).

Secondly, CSR was a broader societal responsibility and was seen as 1) voluntary and 2) differentiated according to the functional dynamics of the societal spheres, *in casu* the economic premises. CSR was explicitly linked to strategic business management by the EU Commission (Liikanen 2003). The EU Commission stresses that "although the prime responsibility of a company is generating profits, companies can at the same time contribute to social and environmental objectives through integrating corporate social responsibility as a strategic investment into their core business strategy, their management instruments and their operations". The concept then moved to corporate social responsiveness (CSR2), which described the ability of the organisation to respond to emerging social pressures in its environment through practical actions (Frederick, 1994:154; Carroll, 1991:40). From this emerged an attempt to address some of the concerns highlighted in the CSR1 debate. The move to corporate social responsiveness provided a clearer understanding of the practical aspects of carrying out social obligations, emphasised the need for tools and organisational structures to facilitate a responsive company (such as social auditing frameworks), encouraged empirical research into the social issues faced by businesses and the responses required to address these issues. The move also drew attention to internal and external organisational constraints on responsiveness such as organisational structure and bureaucracy (Frederick, 1994).

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Thirdly, corporate social and societal responsibility is seen as an expression of continuous poly-context-referential self-legitimising processes. It is based on the independent dynamics with regard to the interdependencies. The voluntary, legitimising character is stressed: "Corporate social responsibility is not an issue for regulation; corporate social responsibility cannot be imposed against the will of enterprises, but can only be promoted together with them under involvement of their stakeholders" (Liikanen 2003). The new take on corporate social responsibility is based on Holmström's (2002:1) assertion that the foundations of social responsibility can be understood in terms of the co-evolution of society and organisations, which can also serve to explain how organisations are legitimised today. Accordingly, the concept of social responsibility defined by Holmström (2006:1) as the 'interrelation between the organisation and society at large' evolved with the evolution of society. Moreover, fulfilling social responsibilities has become necessary for the continued survival of society, resulting in the boundaries of focus within organisations changing from being profit focused too accommodating the increase in social expectations (Holmström, 2002:3).

The new wave of corporate social responsibility offers a philosophical orientation for organisations to consider when balancing the needs of different stakeholders; this gives them the social legitimacy to operate. Arguably, the key drivers of social legitimacy include major forces such as globalisation, the digital network revolution and the empowerment of myriads of new stakeholders, which has resulted in a shift in how organisations self-define and see their function beyond just being providers of products and services but towards being more purposeful-orientated organisations. As a result, this change introduced new forms of organising that challenge traditional principles of organisations that are based on capitalist business models such as functional differentiation, hierarchy and bureaucracy, to mention a few. The sections below explain the three main functions of the reflective paradigm.

2.6 FUNCTIONS OF THE REFLECTIVE PARADIGM

Stahl (2005: 125) places emphasis on the actions that drive effectiveness and improvement of an organisation and that the reflective paradigm requires to succeed. To achieve this Holmström (2003) notes that there are three main functions that make up the reflective paradigm: sensitivity, self-identity and self-presentation. Holmström (2002:2-3; 2006:7-14) and Holmström et al. (2010:9) argue that organisations must fulfil these three functions, which are distinguished from a reflexive and reflective perspective, to attain the ideal of the new social responsibility. These three functions are discussed in detail below:

2.6.1 Sensitivity as a key function of the reflective paradigm

The first function of the reflective paradigm, according to Holmström (2007), is sensitivity which deals with how an organisation sees its environment. The modernist version of the reflexive paradigm sees only its 'native' environment and the perspective is self-centred from within. In reflection, the organisation sees itself from the outside and sees a larger and more complex environment as relevant. Furthermore, Holmström (2007) notes that the reflective second-order observation opens up the possibility for more nuanced perspectives. This is to say the organisation recognises that it operates in a poly-contextual environment with different function systems and regards these environments with respect and understanding (Holmström et al., 2010:9). As a result of the poly-contextual environment, the themes in the business community that are reflexive in nature and understood as 'extra-economic' or external factors in the reflective perspective are core issues on the corporate agenda. This requires that the organisation observes itself from the outside-in as operating in a larger complex poly-contextual environment in which it is embedded, and attempts to understand how social reality is perceived from viewpoints external to the organisation. Furthermore, linear stakeholder models are replaced by increasingly dynamic and fluid models that no longer seei own organisations as the centre, but as one of several poly-centred interacting social systems. As opposed to the self-centred perspective of reflexivity and an environment to be to be managed, reflection involves an attempt to see the world through the eyes of others and sees an environment that needs to be respected (Holmström, 2007).

2.6.2 Self-identity as a key function of the reflective paradigm

The second function of the reflective paradigm is explained by Holmström (2007) as self-identify or contingent decision taker, which deals with the organisation's view of itself and the premises of its decision processes. The characteristic of self-observation pertains to the way in which an organisation negotiates its decision processes (Holmström, 2007:260). Reflection in this instance sees an environment as needing to be respected; the organisation questions its identity, and the roles and responsibilities it has to society. It sees that risky decisions are inevitable; that a precondition of trust is to relate reflectively to the organisation's responsibilities, as opposed to reflexivity where the organisation takes its worldview as given and does not see the importance of taking on the responsibility as decision taker (Holmström & Kjaerbeck, 2007:8). From a reflective perspective, the organisation recognises that its growth and specialisation are not independent of its environment but interdependent in that the multiple bottom lines of the organisation and its stakeholders have become integrated and the fulfilment of these is reliant on mutual resources (Holmström, 2007:258).

A business enterprise reflects upon how basically economic decisions are observed from the mass media, health, educational, political, or family perspectives, for example. Poly-contextual sensitivity is integrated in the decision processes. To exemplify: profit still identifies business as part of the economic system – but in regard to people, planet, and other functional logics. The reflective perspective exposes the interdependence. This leads to themes that were previously outside the organisation's boundaries such as the environment, human rights, the digital divide for the purposes of this discussion, and animal welfare – now being inside them. Within the business community, themes that were reflexively understood as 'extra-economic' in the reflective perspective are core issues on the corporate agenda. In other words, this suggests that reflection implies a change in the business community's understanding of its corporate social responsibility as fulfilled by the narrow economic focus to a social responsibility based on 'enlightened self-interest' (Annan, 2000).

2.6.3 Self-presentation as a key function of the reflective paradigm

The third function, according to Holmström (2007), refers to self-presentation. Self-presentation asserts that in order to facilitate the environment's observation of the organisation, the reflective organisation sees that what different observers consider to be the same thing and generates quite different information for each of these positions (Holmström, 2007). In self-presentation, the organisation must present itself as transparent and sensitive to a dynamic, ambiguous environment plagued with dissent (Holmström et al., 2010:9). Instead of producing more information, the reflective organisation openly acknowledges its responsibility as decision taker and commits itself in relation to society. Holmström (2006) notes that reflexivity is characterised by blind self-presentation from within so 'objective' information and transparency produce dissent rather than consent.

Furthermore, the function of self-presentation is where we find the external focus on values, ethical reporting and value branding to signal what is expected from the organisation. This relates to the views of Stahl (2005:126-127) and Collier (2005:2) with regard to reflective responsibility as a social construct in that its enactment involves participative discourse and decision-making from relevant stakeholders. This grows into an increasingly important function as organisational legitimacy rests in perceptions, which continuously change in poly-contextual dynamics. In this way, risks, uncertainties, implementing and measurement criteria are identified while fostering transparency, moral legitimacy and viability in implementing and addressing issues of ethics and morality (Stahl, 2005:126-127; Collier, 2005:2). Holmström (2007) notes that when legitimacy cannot be justified in naturalness or necessity, then consistent but sensitive and consequently constantly changing self-presentation is apparently required. This is also to say self-presentation serves the purpose of generating trust. Trust relies on opportunities for learning and testing one's trust. If there are only a few opportunities, the result is more likely to be distrust than trust (Luhmann, 1995). Reflexivity is characterised by blind self-presentation from within, relies on confidence and does not generate trust.

Recently, one may argue that assertions of the reflective paradigm regarding social responsibility have been fleshed out in new business models such as shared value business models (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The discussion below outlines the details of shared value and how they relate to the reflective paradigm.

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2.7 AN INTRODUCTION TO A SHARED-VALUE BUSINESS MODEL

In acknowledging that organisations are the predominant decision-makers in society (Holmström, 2006: 8), Colford (2014) and Buchholtz (2015: 40) call for businesses to address wide-scale social issues within their corporate strategies as a means of considering their own survival. Porter and Kramer (2011: 76-77) thus put forth the creation of shared value (CSV) as a strategic sustainable approach to leading social progress while serving the self-interest of organisations and gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the community (Porter & Kramer, 2011: 76-77). CSV is progressive in that it distinctly defines value as benefits in relation to cost, negates trade-off thinking by purporting to simultaneously advance organisations and society, as well as emphasises the reciprocal relationship between healthy organisations shaping healthy societies and vice versa (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

In so doing, businesses must strive to achieve economic progress while concurrently improving the social and economic conditions of their surrounding communities (Dezso, 2013: 7). Porter and Kramer (2011) introduce the concept of "shared value" as a proposed business model for a sustainable business. They assert that shared value is a management strategy in which companies find business opportunities in social problems. It is important to note that shared value operates from the premise that ultimately the most powerful way in which any business can impact societal issues is through the business itself. According to Porter and Kramer (2011), shared value may be created by three main strategies at the business level (referred to as "CSV strategies") by reconceiving products and markets, by redefining productivity in the value chain and by enabling local cluster development. Large international companies are best positioned to reap the rewards of these strategies. It is said that corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes focus on issues related to a business' reputation with limited relevance to any causal description of business behaviour (Peloza, 2006; Van Oosterhout & Heugens, 2008).

In contrast, CSV, by definition, is an integral part of the company's competitive strategy, reflecting the interdependence between the company and the surrounding community: CSV "leverages the unique resources and expertise of the company to create value" and "not only to create demand for its products but also to provide critical public assets and a supportive environment". (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 76/66). For organisations to perform at their best in activist driven contexts and with high expectations from key stakeholders, new business models such as shared value need to be explored more optimally.

Porter and Kramer (2011) thus put forth CSV as a strategic sustainable approach to leading social progress while serving the self-interest of organisations and gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the community. CSV thus reflects a conscious capitalist approach to business that prioritises the mutually reinforcing principles of altruism, the pursuit of higher knowledge and a higher purpose, the creation of a culture of empowerment as well as the recognition of the interdependence of key stakeholders (Mackay, 2011:84-85; Sisodia, 2011:98-99). Simpson, Fischer and Rohde (2013:20) add that by engaging in conscious capitalism, social justice becomes embedded in the core of the business. There has thus been a change in the thinking that business profits from causing problems to business generating a profit from solving social problems (Porter, 2013). An example of conscious capitalism is the movement towards the circular economy in which organisations are expected to maximise and retain the value of the resources (materials and labour, for example) used to produce its products and eradicate waste from the lifecycle of products by facilitating the reuse, refurbishment and recycling of materials as much as possible (Zils, 2014). These characteristics include virtuousness, sustainability and organisational ethics in addition to a reflective stakeholder mindset as a reason organisations should be concerned with sustaining themselves, humanity and the environment. Organisations are starting to recognise that their customers are not only interested in what they sell but also in what they stand for by taking stances on social, cultural and political issues.

2.8 CONCLUSION

This highlights the extended scope of social issues organisations would usually try to tackle in their communication efforts. Organisations are finding themselves in uncharted territories, which sees them having to engage and also take proactive stances by using their power and influence to shape and drive heated social agendas that are often in the public arena. Sell and Miles (2014: 4) note that reflecting on core societal dynamics is essential for organisational growth. They state that organisations that really want to get ahead in the postmodern context need to anticipate how society is moving and evolving and then build a narrative around how messaging and channel investment need to correspond.

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The reflective paradigm stems from the field of public relations and is one of the paradigms influencing the emerging field of strategic communication which will be explained in detail in the next chapter. According to Holmström's (2002:13; 2006:2) perspective of the reflective paradigm, the purpose-driven organisation must assume the role of social actor by consciously reflecting on its responsibilities towards society and the environment. In this instance, the ability to reflect is regarded as the ideal of social responsibility. This idea of social responsibility occurs when the three functions of reflection take place, sensitivity, self-observation and self-presentation (Holmström, 2002:2-3; Holmström, 2006:7-14; Holmström et al., 2010:9). The creation of shared value perspective as propagated by Porter and Kramer (2011) offers a strategic approach for organisations to entrench a higher purpose of existence into their business models, involving a commitment to addressing social and environmental issues. This would serve the self-interest of organisations and allow them to gain legitimacy among their stakeholders. Although governments, NGOs, NPOs and philanthropy as opposed to corporate organisations have traditionally been steered towards addressing social and environmental issues. Porter and Sandel

(2013) argue that progress in addressing these issues on a wider scale with significant impact is incremental, not being made fast enough and is being restricted by a growing lack of resources such as tax revenues and charitable donations. Therefore, the assumption is made that only businesses are in a position to meet these societal needs at a profit and by funding scalable self-sustaining solutions to social problems (Porter, 2013). One may argue that this is a practical example of how the reflective paradigm has been practiced by most organisations in recent years.

It is also imperative to note Holmström's (2007) statement that even though characterised by reflection, none of the three functions of the reflective paradigm, which include sensitivity, self-identity and self-presentation live up to the ideals of social responsibility. They have to be closely interrelated in the organisation irrespective of whether they are placed in one or more organisational departments. For instance, deliberations on identity would not be seen as socially responsible if they are not rooted in poly-contextual sensitivity. Self-presentation would be seen as window-dressing if not in accordance with identity as well as sensitivity. In closing, to become fully reflective in nature, strategic communication principles can be used to resemble this theory. The section below discusses strategic communication as an emerging paradigm organisations can explore.

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CHAPTER 3

THE EMERGING PARADIGM OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

3. 1 INTRODUCTION

In the wake of current global political, economic and social turmoil, a vast array of new management values and methods are emerging. Increasing technological complexity, changing lifestyles and expectations, coupled with the growth in knowledge workers (Verwey, 2015). These major forces are globalisation and the development of interactive technologies such as Web 2.0, which went beyond the information sharing capabilities of Web 1.0 and globalisation has allowed for the exponential growth of these technologies across borders at a more rapid space. These major forces have reshaped management processes and dictated that organisations evolve beyond the traditional bureaucratic model. Accordingly, organisations and communication professionals are coming under increasing pressure not only to learn, change and adapt, but also to take actions that are ethically acceptable and sustainable, and which balance the interests of a range of different stakeholders (Rowley & Gibbs 2008: 357). Organisations are increasingly finding themselves at points of inflection as new realities emerge as a result of major forces driving radical change in business conduct.

The adoption of the reflective paradigm that has influenced the emerging discipline of strategic communication requires organisations to be “reflective” and “strategic” in their organisational strategies. The section below will delve deeper into the emerging paradigm of strategic communication, key drivers and trends as well as a brief look into the practice of strategic communication. This chapter also delves into the concepts such as “socially conscious organisations” and ethics as a basis for organisations to focus their social role.

3. 2 CONCEPTUALISING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The emerging paradigm of strategic communication is discussed as the most suitable theoretical perspective from which to explore the pressure on organisations to address social issues as it draws attention to the role of communication professionals as organisational agents who represent the conscience of the organisation (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373; Holtzhausen, 2000:101-105). These agents have the ability to shape values, inform and motivate the organisation’s stakeholders to act on behalf of specific issues (Heath, 2000:82; Melbourne Mandate, 2012:3). In addition, the emerging paradigm of strategic communication emphasises the purpose of the organisation, which is to align stakeholder needs and values. Thus it indicates how power has shifted from organisations as the single producers of content to society as active co-creators of content (Arens, Schaefer & Weigold, 2009:359; Interbrand, 2012:2). From this stance, strategic communication provides an approach through which organisational legitimacy can be attained.

In the current multi-stakeholder environments, organisations seek legitimacy to meet the social norms and expectations of influential stakeholders and maintain their reputation in the long term. According to Joseph and Hashmi (2018), organisations draw their legitimacy consideration from the institutional environment, prioritising and integrating institutions to form their identity. However, it is noted that organisations have traditionally addressed sustainability through the concept of ‘socially responsible organisations’ or corporate social responsibility, which has proven to have limitations. The conversation about creating a sustainable future has been on the rise in recent years as businesses have been criticised for their often unethical business practices. Mepham (2012) notes that the case for more effective regulation is further reinforced by the limited impact of some of the existing international initiatives for promoting high corporate standards; for example, the UN Global Compact, the World Bank, Women Empowerment Principles, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Businesses that sign up to these initiatives are required to ensure that they support and respect human rights within their sphere of influence. The emerging paradigm of strategic communication is one way to address the changes facing organisations.

Holtzhausen and Zerfass (2015) state that strategic communication was initially used for a niche market. However, in the 21st century, strategic communication evolved into an umbrella term used to cover various communication methods used to reach and influence various publics. Furthermore, strategic communication as a discipline has emerged due to the evolution of organisational communication, which previously focused on information transfer whereby organisations were viewed as monolithic (Nothhaft & Schölzel, 2015:28; Torp, 2015:34; Falkheimer, 2014:126). For the purpose of this discussion, the central values of the theory of strategic communication have been identified as organisational purpose, agency, stakeholder collaboration and organisational legitimacy as will be discussed further below.

Hallahan, Holtzhausen, van Ruler, Verčic and Sriramesh (2007: 17) originally defined strategic communication as “deliberate and purposeful communication by an organisation to fulfil its mission”. Strategic communication covers the use of public relations, marketing, campaigning, and financial communication (Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2015). However, Overton-de Klerk and Verwey (2013: 370) explained that “strategic communication is about how an organisation functions to advance its mission by intentional, persuasive means of communication, not only via marketing, corporate and other institutionalised forms of public communication but via all of the organisation's communication ". Therefore, it can be stated that strategic communication is the use of various communication methods by an organisation to achieve its organisational goals. Strategic communication focuses on the organisation in terms of how it presents itself as well as how it promotes itself through the intentional activities of its employees, leaders and communication practitioners (Hallahan et al, 2007). Overton-de Klerk and Verwey (2013) also explained that through communication the organisation is reflectively shaping itself. In other words, by using strategic communication, organisations can influence the perceptions society has of the organisation as it strategically presents and promotes itself.

3.3 CORE DRIVING FORCES – SHIFTS IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The above components of strategic communication may not be exhaustive, but in themselves they have culminated in shifts, also called ‘core driving forces’, which has led to the emerging paradigm of communication management in organisations, namely strategic communication. The following components in organisational communication are evident from the literature, the shift from divergence to convergence, from monologue to dialogue, from consensus to conflict, from integration to collaboration and from corporate social responsibility to accountability. These shifts highlight the differences between the modernist and postmodern approaches to strategic communication.

The first shift, from divergence to convergence regards strategic communication as a single coordinated effort in which all communication activities work together to create synergy (Wang, 2007: 93). Strategic communication is fast emerging as the overarching, converging communication function of the organisation, which refers to all informational, persuasive, discursive and relational communications used in the context of achieving an organisation’s mission. Secondly, the shift from a top-down to a bottom-up approach; this shift is also evident in marketing and corporate communication and research in general. Communication professionals increasingly listen to and seek the co-participation of community stakeholders in the development of corporate communication strategies (Overton-de Klerk & Oelofse 2010).

The shift from monologue to dialogue as identified by Du Plessis (2006), Hallahan et al. (2007), and Ströh (2007), is where the traditional approach of *one voice* has shifted to the emergent approach of many diverse voices. This openness to diverse viewpoints and freedom of speech encourages creative and divergent approaches to problem solving. Lastly, the shift from consensus to conflict/dissent, which asserts that stakeholders have a multiplicity of voices and propositions to advance the organisation for the benefit of all stakeholders directly or indirectly (Janssens & Zanoni 2005). Therefore, within the strategic paradigm, the role of management is no longer control, but to steer the organisation through complexity and consensus, which forms meaning and understanding.

The shift from consensus to conflict/dissent, as explained by Overton-de Klerk and Verwey (2013), is that the existence of complexity represents a shift in power and control from management to individual stakeholders, allowing them to make decisions based on the value

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systems they are able to support. Strategic communication in post-bureaucratic contexts acknowledges and fosters multiple propositions and perceptions to allow for conflict and rhetoric that ultimately advances the organisation to the benefit of all stakeholders needs (Janssens & Zanoni 2005). The role of management is no longer to control heterogeneity, but to moderate and steer the organisation through complexity. Whereas modernist approaches to communication management legitimate managerial power through consensus-seeking processes, within strategic communication paradigms this is achieved through the opportunity to participate in the discourse, even though the process may ultimately give rise to conflict and dissent, which may lead to new forms of understanding and knowledge. Strategic communication thus becomes a process that legitimates many different and heterogeneous forms of meaning and understanding.

The shift from corporate social responsibility to accountability suggests that successful corporations in post-bureaucratic contexts need to develop a new social contract that sees them redefining the boundaries of their responsibility, and accepting accountability for the way they use resources and how they contribute to the environment (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). The stakeholder concept, originally described in the influential stakeholder theorising work by Freeman (1984), has expanded over the years to include multiple stakeholders that do not have a direct stake in the organisation, but are viewed as active 'influencers' who can affect or are affected by the actions of the organisation (Coombs 2000, 75; Parmar, Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Purnell & De Colle, 2010). This would also entail society's expectation that organisations are good citizens who can be held accountable for providing greater support and 'corporate social responsiveness' to the societies they are part of (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2008).

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The shift from integration to collaboration, which makes the assertion that collaboration goes beyond integration and requires accepting (in the era of 'real-time marketing') that the organisation is no longer the sole author of the brand script, but requires constant collaboration with (mostly uninvited) guest authors. The ideal of integration has always been to let the organisation speak with ''*one voice*'by 'strategically' coordinating all behaviour and messaging to support a consistent position. Now, *many "diverse voices"*, raised in consumer-generated media, add considerable noise to the organisational message, challenging the identity that the brand has so carefully constructed (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013: 3). According to Overton-de Klerk and Verwey (2013), collaboration means to 'work in combination with' or, more tellingly, 'to cooperate treacherously with the enemy'. In the era of the super consumer, it appears that brand identity is a construct that is constantly being *co-created* in collaboration with stakeholders and is beyond the control of the organisation. According to B'beri and Audette-Longo (2009) collaboration, as an existing actuality occurring in the social realm, is largely represented as 'communities of inquiry' that coordinate as a means to achieve, through synthesis, new formations of knowledge.

3.4 CENTRAL VALUES OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

For the purpose of this discussion, the central values of the theory of strategic communication have been identified as organisational purpose, the agency of strategic communication professionals, stakeholder collaboration and organisational legitimacy, which are discussed further below.

3.4.1 Strategic communication emphasises the organisational purpose

Strategic communication emphasises the importance of purpose-driven organisations. Vella (2015: 7) notes that a purposeful organisation needs to stand for something it really believes in and that goes beyond profit making. Murray (2016) and Christian, Velleman and Mackay (2013:2) also note that a distinctive purpose is the result of the organisation being driven by its authentic higher intent whereby its actions are more important than its communications. Roll (2015:3) argues that organisations that claim to be purposeful come from a better understanding and are interested in structures that are transpersonal, and are sustainable over a long time in changing circumstances. The elements of purposefulness inherent in strategic communication clarify the purpose-driven nature of an organisation's messages (Aggerholm & Thomsen, 2016). Allen (2016: 4) strengthens the point that strategic purposefulness regarding sustainability efforts can be used to encourage creativity, minimise conflict and facilitate change.

Furthermore, purposeful organisations are required to be responsive to the social consciousness of individual stakeholders and their collective needs; assume the role of citizens in society by actively engaging in societal and environmental issues, and attract and galvanise employees seeking meaningful work. The organisation establishes stakeholder engagement by inspiring belief in its reason for existing and its commitment to purpose and in the process, its shared collective ideals act as a catalyst for organisational growth (Christian et al., 2013:11).

The ambiguity created by purpose creates conditions where in which organisations can change their operations over time in response to changing environmental conditions, it can also be used to build cohesiveness within groups around sustainability initiatives and allow employees to protect their opinions, beliefs, and feelings while maintaining their relationships. The significance of being purpose driven is that this moral compass guides the organisation's decisions and inspires a strong corporate reputation among its stakeholders when its purpose is aligned to its culture, values, communications and actions (Reputation Institute, 2016). Ihlen and Verhoeven (2015:131) provide examples of how organisations embody purpose through intentionally communicating or creating meaning that resonates with their stakeholders, influencing and persuading stakeholder (activists) behaviour, gaining a mutual understanding of management's decisions and highlighting the role of communication within activities in which the organisation may engage. To achieve this purpose, communication practitioners need to become "agents of change", the section below will explain this concept in detail.

3.4.2 The communication professional as an organisational agent

Another important concept of strategic communication is the role of communication practitioners who are said to act on behalf of their organisations. According to Holzhausen and Zerfass (2013: 283), the concept of strategic communication has evolved to represent "the practice of deliberate and purposive communication that a communication agent enacts in the public sphere on behalf of a communicative entity to reach set goals". Ihlen and Verhoeven (2015:131) add that communication agents are expected to resist power and control while undertaking and promoting activities and practices that transform organisations and societies.

However, practising this deliberate communication does not imply that communication agents manipulate or control stakeholders as was the case in the past, but rather aim to influence them in thought and action. The role of the communication practitioner as agent of the organisation is further indicated by their embarking on informational, persuasive, relational or discursive communication in advancing organisations, causes and social movements. This is achieved through influencing and maintaining or changing attitudes or behaviour towards services, products and issues (Hallahan et al., 2007:4). As such, Holtzhausen (2008:4849) indicates the scope of communicative entities includes social, economic, political, government and entertainment bodies and organisations. The role of the communication agent is to maintain the healthy reputation of these entities through the use of strategic communication, as stated by Holtzhausen and Zerfass (2015:5).

Communication practitioners are therefore required to define and maintain an organisation's character and values, galvanise support thereof among stakeholders;, ensure the organisation's decision-making is guided by these values, build an organisational culture of listening and engagement and encourage responsible behaviour within organisations (Melbourne Mandate, 2012:1-3). Thus, strategic communication professionals assume the role of agents who represent the conscience of the organisation (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373; Holtzhausen, 2000:101, 105) and are required to draw attention to and shape values and inform and motivate the organisation's stakeholders to act on behalf of a specific issue.

3.4.3 Strategic communication aims to inspire stakeholder collaboration

In the emerging paradigm of strategic communication is the shift from integration to collaboration. Now that all stakeholders can communicate freely with the organisation, there are more opportunities for brands to collaborate with stakeholders instead of just integrating those (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). The development of Web 2.0 and other technologies that allow for interaction between people and between consumers and organisations and vice versa (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). As a result, power has shifted from the organisation having control as the single producer of content to society's shared ownership of multiple hubs of content which it actively co-creates (Arens, Schaefer & Weigold, 2009:359; Interbrand, 2012:2). As an example, the redress of power from organisations to society is further shown by the role of so-called influencers as seen in recent years. They are described by (WARC, 2010) as individuals with a wealth of product experience and information who initiate discussions with others and share their knowledge and experience with their friends, fans and followers. This is significant in light of the expectation economy, which refers to the current socio-economic environment in which organisations are forced to operate according to the expectations of experienced consumers who are well informed, savvy and demand that the product and service standards of brands deliver beyond their expectations (Trendwatching, 2008).

In support of this movement, recent research shows that consumers expect brands and organisations to adopt a 'higher level of consciousness', commit to a higher purpose and contribute meaningfully towards making a real difference in their lives as well as in the world (Trendwatching, 2015; Mackay, 2011:83). This socially conscious consumer is further depicted in a 2014 Nielsen study comprising 30 000 surveys where findings revealed that 55% of individuals are willing to pay more for products and services from socially or environmentally responsible companies. This is telling of the 'social contract' referred to by Carroll and Buchholtz (2015:19), which represents the rising expectations society has of business, where promotion of society's well-being is seen as 'the right thing to do' as well as being good for business (Meyer, 2015).

Therefore, collaboration, communication and co-creation as drivers of strategic communication enable the brand and consumer to connect and build their relationship. In addition, the emerging paradigm of strategic communication emphasises the purpose of the organisation is to align stakeholder needs and values, and thus it indicates how power has shifted from organisations as the single producers of content to society as active co-creators of content (Arens, Schaefer & Weigold, 2009:359; Interbrand, 2012:2). From this stance, strategic communication provides an approach through which organisational legitimacy can be attained.

3.5 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN PRACTICE

This paper has attempted to reinforce the argument that in the 21st- century organisations are expected to become social actors that are considerate of the broader societal context in which they exist and operate. Organisations are being called on to take responsibility for the ways their operations impact societies (directly and indirectly) and the natural environment. According to (Mepham, 2012: 34) "Globalisation and the growth and reach of the international private sector raise tough questions for society about the regulation and governance of corporations. While considerable progress has been made to account for their environmental performance, progress on social issues such as human rights, corruption, corporate transparency and labour standards has been more limited". While it is still contested whether corporations ought to be understood to have social responsibilities beyond their wealth-generating function, there is increasing internal and external pressure on organisations to fulfil broader social goals (Davies, 2003; Freeman et al., 2001; Logsdon & Wood, 2002). Brenkert (2004: 203) states that the motives that led to companies employing these kinds of strategies include social expectations from the public and stakeholders in individual business, formal and informal regulatory systems, concerns about corporate reputation and new views on the value-creating nature of business ethics and corporate social responsibility all leading to the sustainability of the organisation.

This assertion highlights the need for organisations to become corporate citizens in order to become social change agents. Furthermore, Brenkert (2004: 204) argues that corporate citizenship includes both corporate ethics and corporate social responsibility; it is the process by which organisations create policies and processes to make ethical decisions, anticipate social issues and stakeholder concerns, and create strategies to respond and assess business decisions in the broader societal context/environment. Organisations are also being asked to apply sustainability principles to the ways in which they conduct their business. Sustainability refers to an organisation's activities, typically considered voluntary, that demonstrate the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in its business operations and in interactions with stakeholders (Van Marrewijk & Werre, 2003). Indeed, sustained profits and principles are mutually supportive, and an increasing number of companies view corporate responsibility as integral to their systems of governance.

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NGOs are traditionally known for dealing with social issues, but business trends in the 21st century highlight the shift corporates or for-profit organisations are making towards taking responsibility and recognising their profound role in and impact on society beyond profit making. Holmström (2007: 1) argues that from being relatively simple and a question of legal and unambiguous market relations, the interrelations between organisations and society grew decisively more complex and ambiguous in the latter half of the 20th century, increasingly activating and diffusing new communicative structures such as public relations.

Organisations must maintain a relationship with diverse stakeholders on the basis of transparency and dialogue, thereby answering justifiable questions for society. Cramer, Van der Heijden and Jonker (2006: 3) make the assertion that in the above definition 'Profit' stands for profit maximisation, 'Planet' for ecological quality and 'People' for human wellbeing within and outside the organisation. Furthermore, these organisations amplify the powers of the individual and provide an interface to the outside world. They are points of connection and field spaces from which new directions can emerge. To a large extent, the purposefulness of an organisation is about driving sustainability achieved through organisational strategy and the idea of sustainability is becoming a natural element of their actions and not an issue separate from the strategy being executed.

3.6 LEGITIMISING THE ORGANISATION THROUGH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Legitimating notions regulate the interrelation between organisation and society, and set the premises for strategic communication (which will be discussed in more detail). As globalising organisations increasingly face conflicting perceptions of legitimacy, new challenges to strategic communication arise. Different types of societal constitution breed different legitimating corporate settings (Holmström, Falkheimer, & Nielsen, 2010). As a premise, it is important to note that the legitimacy of an organisation stems from Legitimacy theory. Organisational legitimacy is a collective socially constructed perception of how society understands and sees an organisation arise when beliefs about the organisation correspond with its aligned words and actions.

Additionally, legitimacy as a theoretical concept suggests that a social contract exists between the company and society (Deegan, 2006; Deegan & Samkin, 2009). Bonson and Ratkai (2012) note that society is a wider category than stakeholders because it contains entities who are not stakeholders in the company. So, this means that a business should conduct its activities in a manner that is socially acceptable, not only following the expectations (for example) of investors. This also requires continuous change from the company's side to survive. From this viewpoint, organisations should voluntarily report both financial and non-financial information according to the expectations of society (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Most companies do this through their annual Sustainability or Integrated reports.

This allows organisations to sustain public support and trust and is sought by organisations in an effort to secure continuity and credibility (Suchman, 1995:574-575). Falkheimer (2014:124) accordingly notes that the key focus of strategic communication is to defend organisational legitimacy, while Ihlen and Verhoeven (2015:132) contend that organisations must have their decisions legitimised on a continuous basis through a strategic focus on emergent strategy formulation, which legitimises and values the actions and decisions of stakeholders at all levels of the organisation. Similarly, Van Ruler and Verčic (2005:266) indicate that a reflective sense-making perspective of strategic communication is required to maintain the organisation's licence to operate as influential, dialogic, relational and informational. Communicative interventions are used to solve the organisation's problems by "co-producing societal (public) legitimation", in light of them being bound by what their environments find acceptable. In other words, organisations have a moral identity, or legitimacy that considers the social and political aspects of the regions in which they operate. Thus, while external institutional factors influence the firm, they may in turn react and strategically seek to influence their external environment.

Organisations draw their legitimacy from the macro environment, prioritising and integrating different societal institutions to form their identity. Organisations, therefore, should seek such legitimacy through absorbing and exhibiting behaviour consistent with their beliefs derived through sources internal and/or external to the firm. However, as multiple and competing institutions exist and continue to evolve (e.g., Campbell, 2004; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012), organisational legitimacy is constantly subject to challenge and contestation. While institutions based on capitalism dominate the discourse, one of the significant changes from globalisation is the increased attention to corporate social responsibility, particularly given the lack of regulatory presence across national boundaries (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). Within this institutional context, legitimacy is important for organisations, as sustaining market-based institutions requires trust and accountability. As Suchman (1995) points out, "audiences are more likely to supply resources to organisations that appear desirable, proper, or appropriate" (Name: 574) and are "more meaningful, more predictable and more trustworthy" (Name: 575). In addition, stakeholders have different levels of "salience," i.e., power over resources and "urgency," potential impact from an organisation's actions (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997) that need to be considered when they develop relationships with their stakeholders. Thus, firms can create the cultures that match their desired identity. One may further make the argument that legitimacy may be attained by prioritising organisational ethics. The discussion below focuses on the prioritisation of organisational ethics in strategic communication.

3.7 PRIORITISING ORGANISATIONAL ETHICS IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

As business practices become more transparent and the people behind those businesses become more public, customers and other stakeholders begin to expect more from them. It's no longer a faceless business merely making a profit and paying its investors. To be successful in today's environment, a business has to be socially conscious and to behave ethically. Carroll (1990:20) describes business ethics as guidelines that assist in ethical decision-making, where these include justice, rights and utilitarian principles considered to be acceptable according to societal norms. Thus, ethical decision-making involves reflection on the decision or action to be taken, its comparison with societal standards and norms, as well as employing the ethics and principles most relevant to guiding the decision (Carroll, 1990:20). Moreover, Lawton (2005:241) suggests that the ethical or non-ethical behaviour of an organisation is dependent on how well its values are reconciled formally through its codes, structures and rules, and exhibited informally through its culture and authenticity, while maintaining regard for societal values as enacted through government, laws and civic culture. Additionally, the 'ethicalness' of the organisation should be ascertained in conjunction with the motives behind its decisions or actions, strategic business strategy, as well as responsibility policies, key performance indicators, implementation, and operational and reporting frameworks (Willenius, 2005:139).

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In South Africa, for example, a reporting framework that came about in recognition of the challenging external environment faced by South African organisations (such as a corrupt, poverty and inequality-ridden society) is the King IV Code (Institute of Directors Southern Africa, 2016) on corporate governance. The King IV Code (Institute of Directors Southern Africa, 2016) underlines that effective, ethical and conscious leadership must be adopted by organisations to ensure that sustainable value in the organisation, and its reputation and legitimacy is built.

According to Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) South Africa (2016), King IV builds on its predecessors' positioning of sound corporate governance as an essential element of good corporate citizenship. PwC further states that good corporate governance requires the acknowledgement that an organisation doesn't operate in a vacuum, but is an integral part of society and therefore is accountable to its current and future stakeholders. With the introduction of an 'apply and explain' regime, King IV asks organisations to be transparent in the application of their corporate governance practices. This is to say, good governance is not a tick-box or compliance exercise, but rather that its mindful application harnesses its benefits in the interests of the organisation (PWC South Africa, 2016).

The King IV Code (Institute of Directors Southern Africa, 2016:7) further highlights that the organisation should strive to develop a strong ethical culture in which it polices itself and reports on its performance across its social, economic and environmental indicators over its short-, medium- and long-term operations. To achieve this culture, Shenoy (2014) indicates that organisations require an agile and inspirational leadership style that integrates competitive advantage with long-term sustainability. Transformational leaders express their personal value systems, instil a culture of transformation in the workplace by engaging employees to drive positive change beyond their individual self-interests and unite their followers by changing their goals and beliefs (Myler, 2013; Shenoy, 2014). This is in contrast to the transactional leadership style of a two-way exchange of reward or sanction that takes place between follower and leader.

In their role as organisational activists, strategic communication practitioners may lead the CSV agenda by encouraging reflective responsibility, drawing attention to the social issues that need to be attended to and communicated about, and ensuring they are aligned to the organisation's values as well as garnering support thereof from the organisation's stakeholders. In recognising the role they have to play in addressing the social needs prevalent in their surrounding environments as dictated by the orientation of CSV, organisations should also embrace the characteristics of the virtuous organisation.

3.8 THE LINK BETWEEN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

The context of strategic communication in which organisations are currently operating is aligned with the reflective paradigm in that the concept of strategic communication has evolved. It is

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defined by Holzhausen and Zerfass (2013:283) as “the practice of deliberate and purposive communication that a communication agent enacts in the public sphere on behalf of a communicative entity to reach set goals”. Therefore, the purpose of the organisation considered by Murray (2016) and Christian et al., (2013) is authentic higher intent, which can be equated with it actively addressing social and environmental responsibilities in meeting individual and collective stakeholder needs around social consciousness. In light of the increased focus on sustainability globally, this purposive organisational mind-set is necessary to promote sustainability in business, whereby organisations and industry leaders must be held accountable for their impact on the social, economic and environmental dimensions in which they operate. The discussion below outlines the concept of sustainability as it pertains to the social and environmental obligations of organisations, together with the related paradigms of shared value, the virtuous organisation and micro-CSR in greater detail.

Since it is noted that organisations have traditionally addressed sustainability through corporate social responsibility, this concept and its evolution are discussed, along with reference to a recent development in the field known of CSV as explained above. CSV is seen as a suitable framework of social responsibility for organisations to adopt in order to address social issues while aiming to achieve profit (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

In line with the creation of the shared value perspective, the paradigm of the virtuous organisation and its characteristics of virtuousness, ethical behaviour and sustainability are considered in this chapter. This is in relation to the focus on preserving the welfare of society and the environment due to the extensive influence of organisations on these spheres (Willenius, 2005:138-142).

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According to Klauer (1999:119), sustainability involves future consequences being integrated into current decision-making with all actions assessed by asking how fair action towards the future inhabitants of the world as well as fairness towards the planet can be achieved today. The Global Reporting Index (2016:31) concurs that sustainable development or sustainability is development to meet the needs of the present without compromising the fulfilment of future generations’ needs. The Global Reporting Index (2016:31) adds that the three focal areas of sustainable development are the environment, social and economic interests of broader society as opposed to the welfare of particular organisations. A study by Ernst & Young and the Boston College Centre for Corporate Citizenship (2016) indicates that the role of business in society is an ongoing debate in public discourse due to issues that affect society such as human rights, pollution and climate change, and therefore prompts a greater need for sustainability, transparency and responsibility in business.

3.9 CONCLUSION

Organisations are increasingly becoming a tool in shaping public policy and in instigating public debate, thereby playing an active role in shaping democracy throughout the world. Strategic communication is required to maintain the organisation's licence to operate as influential, dialogic, relational and informational. Communicative interventions are used to solve the organisation's problems by co-producing social legitimacy – social license to operate (Van Ruler Verčic (2005:266). This can be achieved by employing key strategic communication concepts such as creating purposeful organisations driven by a moral compass that guides the organisation's decisions and inspires a strong corporate reputation among its stakeholders when its purpose is aligned to its culture, values, communications and actions. Strategic Communication also empowers communication professionals as change agents embarking on informational, persuasive, relational or discursive communication in advancing organisations, causes and social movements through influencing and maintaining or changing attitudes or behaviours towards services, products and issues.

And lastly, by collaborating with stakeholders through collaboration, communication and co-creation as a driver of strategic communication to enable the brand and consumer to connect and build on their relationship. Therefore, the purpose of the organisation considered by Murray (2016) and Christian et al., (2013) is to be authentic in its higher intent, which can be equated with it actively addressing social and environmental responsibilities to meet individual and collective stakeholder needs around social consciousness. In light of the increased focus on stakeholder management and to ensure that organisations achieve social legitimacy from their various constituencies, it is important to note the evolution of organisational stakeholders and their impact on organisations. The following chapter aims to explore the evolution of organisational stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4

THE EVOLUTION OF STAKEHOLDER THEORY: A FOCUS ON STAKEHOLDER ACTIVISM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Falconi (2009:4) “the effective governance of stakeholder relationships is the new global frontier” for communication management. On the one hand the process of communication is imperative and on the other hand, the enabling tools for stakeholder relationships are important”. Since its inception stakeholder theory has served as an important theory of the organisation, providing a holistic framework for situation analyses and strategic decision-making (Freeman, 1984; Frooman, 1999; Hendry, 2001; Nwanji and Fu, 2007; Preble, 2005; Meintjes, 2012). Stakeholder theory’s intuitive appeal and relative simplicity of operationalisation has contributed to its widespread acceptance as an important corporate governance tool by both academics and practitioners (Fassin, 2008; Friedman and Miles, 2006; Tomasic and Fu, 2006).

The social responsibility of organisations, which was traditionally driven by the motive of profit and recognised as mono-contextual reflexivity representing the interests of one group of stakeholders (shareholders), has progressed to the organisation undertaking social responsibility in the context of poly-contextual reflection. This is to say the attention is paid not only to profit but also to the well-being of society and the planet (Holmström, 2006), representing the consideration of multiple stakeholders' interests. Therefore, an understanding of the stakeholder concept, stakeholder relationships, stakeholder engagement, governance, issues management, and crisis management/conflict resolution and reputation management is required and therefore the focus of the below chapter. The section below briefly delves into Stakeholder theory, with particular focus on stakeholder activism and broadly into stakeholder expectations and the impact they have on organisations in the current business context. For this study, activists groups as an integral stakeholder group for organisations will be explored in more detail.

4.2 CONCEPTUALISING STAKEHOLDER THEORY

The stakeholder paradigm has been gaining currency over the past few decades and technological breakthroughs have been influential in building its momentum. The literature on Stakeholder theory has evolved from Friedman's classic economic model to an approach that asks firms to balance their stakeholder interests with their business objectives (Freeman, 1994: 421). Stakeholder theory gained momentum in the past 20 years as a reaction to traditional ‘shareholder' theorists whose view of the organisation had a ‘finance and market myopia' (Clarke, 2004: 174). It defends accountability to a broad range of stakeholders that goes beyond the shareholder.

The latest move in strategic communication highlights that brands/organisations are an extension of the lives led by consumers, and if brand messaging, intention or engagement is not what is expected – loyalty shifts. Consumers are holding brands accountable to ensure they are constantly adding meaningful value to society (Llopis, 2014). This is reinforced by a study conducted by The CSR Blog (2011), which found that consumers knew that businesses exist to make a profit. But increasingly, consumers said they cared about the social and environmental impact of business operations. In her seminal work, Fournier (1998) found a full range of social relationships that stakeholders develop with brands, including arranged marriages, friendships, kinships, dependencies and flings. Different social roles are associated with distinctive behaviour codes or expectations that influence how they are evaluated. Aggarwal (2004) found that evaluations of a brand are influenced by the specific role that the brand is expected to play (close friend or business partner). For example, charging consumer’s fees for a special service is deemed an appropriate action in an exchange relationship, but a violation of norms in a communal relationship. Consistently, Aaker, Fournier, and Brasel (2004) document that brand personalities such as ‘sincerity‘, ‘ honesty‘ and ‘ fairness‘ are more suitable for companies that want to position their brands as friends to their stakeholders.

Such relationships between business and society are marked by inter-group liberalism, referring to open negotiation between interest groups, where the interests of ordinary people are taken into account by challenging unresponsive government and corporate structures (Grunig and White 1992: 43–44; Mersham et al. 1995: 39). This implies that businesses have an ‘outward’ orientation, where all the parts of a system are predisposed to being adaptive and adaptable parts of a larger system (Littlejohn & Foss 2005: 40–41; Van der Walt 2006: 118–119). This type of business has symmetrical relationships with society (Grunig & White 1992: 44–45). Symmetrical power relationships are often associated with reciprocity, which implies a high level of wellbeing associated with a state of ‘spirit’, love, celebration of life, a virtuous life, prosperity, a stress-free social and physical environment, as well as enabling institutions and conditions (Eagleton 2007: 140–160; Calkins & Vézina 1996).

As a result, this has translated into a collision where consumers, buying into brand values and the heightened ethical awareness driven by an increasingly “woke” consumers (consumers that are aware of issues concerning social justice and racial justice), are voting (purchasing) with their money more than ever before. Brand activism is gaining traction and has the power to shape our economies and culture (Lirtsman, 2017). A recent Forbes study found that 75% of millennials said it's important that the brands they buy from give back to society, the new breed of tech-savvy and social media-driven consumers isn't afraid to hold brands accountable online and in public spheres. This is evidenced by recent boycotts like the "Grab Your Wallet" campaign against brands with connections to Trump. Inversely, most of the companies that took a clear stance against the travel ban saw their stock prices rise. Companies like Netflix, Starbucks, Facebook and Microsoft have done quite well in both positive social mentions and stock performance since they started taking a position on social injustices (Lirtsman, 2017).

Organisations and companies in particular have always been the focus of stakeholder management. Freeman's definition of a stakeholder is probably the most cited. According to him, a stakeholder is "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives" (Freeman 1984: 25). Although other publications suggest variations of this definition, all define stakeholders by relating them to a focal organisation. Mitchell et al. (1997: 858) collected 28 stakeholder definitions of which 25 refer to an "organisation", a "firm", a "corporation" or a "business". The other three definitions cite "contracts" (Cornell & Shapiro, 1987: 5), a "relationship" (Thompson, Wartick & Smith, 1991: 209) and "joint value creation" (Freeman, 1994: 415) and thus indirectly connect stakeholders to a focal organisation.

Colley et al. (2003: 216) note that all organisations have multiple stakeholders whose needs must be considered to achieve sustainable success. Phillips (2003) puts forward a normative approach to Stakeholder theory, describing it as 'a theory of organisational management and ethics, Stakeholder theory assumes that value creation is part of doing business. In this instance, the definition of value varies depending on how the purpose of the business is defined and how the responsibilities executives have towards their stakeholders are articulated (Freeman, Wicks & Parmar, 2004). The different approaches to these two points will define the nature of a business' relationship with its ecosystem and result in different views of stakeholder theory (Kantarelis, 2010). Bradburn (2001) holds the view that there are two types of stakeholder: those who are vital to the survival of the organisation, and any group that can affect or be affected by the organisation but who do not have direct control.

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Stakeholder theory in its traditional sense does not sufficiently reflect what happens in multi-stakeholder networks. In acknowledging the limited perspective of organisation-focused Stakeholder theory, organisations should simultaneously practice both organisation-focused and issues-focused stakeholder management, as argued by Roloff (2008). Roloff (2008:235) also argues that stakeholder theory is limited in that it places emphasis on the organisation as the focal point and that stakeholders are identified either through their relationship with the organisation or through 'claiming a stake' in the organisation. This refers to organisation-focused stakeholder management, which aims to protect the organisation using relationship management to interact strategically with all stakeholders and ensure these interactions assist the organisation to achieve its goals (Roloff, 2008:245). Roloff (2008:238) re-conceptualises Freeman's organisation-focused stakeholder definition to that of "in the context of multi-stakeholder networks a stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the approach to the issue addressed by the network". Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) and Reinicke and Deng (2000) describe multi-stakeholder networks as voluntary collaborative partnerships comprising a number of stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments, businesses and civil society who gather to address complex multi-dimensional issues that require a collective effort to be resolved, an example of which is the United Nations Global Compact.

4.3 THE SHIFT TOWARDS ISSUE-FOCUSED STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Issues-focused stakeholder management explains how an organisation acts in the same capacity as other stakeholders to address an issue of shared concern through a “shared course of action communication” (Roloff, 2008: 245-247). Roloff (2008:235), however, argues that Stakeholder theory is limited in that it places emphasis on the organisation as the focal point – in that stakeholders are identified either through their relationship with the organisation or through “claiming a stake” in the organisation. This refers to organisation-focused stakeholder management, which aims to protect the organisation using relationship management to interact strategically with all stakeholders and to ensure these interactions assist the organisation to achieve its goals (Roloff, 2008:245). Attaining moral legitimacy through assessing various stakeholder expectations and attempting to satisfy these to some extent is the aim of issues-focused stakeholder management (Roloff, 2007:246). Therefore, from a reflective perspective, social norms are regarded as contingent products of choice to which risk is attributed and whereby the organisation actively generates trust through ongoing engagement with its stakeholders (Holmström; 2007:259), further enhancing its reputation and credibility. In addition, contingent decisions are continuously recreated through organisations’ decision processes, with organisations seen as the predominant decision makers in society, where making contingent decisions involves undertaking social responsibilities and promoting the sustainability of society (Holmström, 2006:8). Holmström (2006:9) elaborates further adding that contingent decision-making by organisations based on responsibility is able to inspire the trust of stakeholders, particularly in an uncertain and risky environment.

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In managing issues, the organisation presents issues to stakeholders through narratives of value, policy or fact to gain support for the issues and to maintain stakeholder relationships through addressing issues that affect all stakeholders (Heath, 2006:90-91). As a result, this has created a blurring of genres within the communication disciplines such as public relations (PR), marketing and corporate communications, and has redefined the role of communication professionals within business and society. Such fundamental changes require that business, scholars and communication practitioners challenge their assumptions and consider the implications of these paradigm shifts (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). "In these redefined roles they must act virtuously and, based on personal values, have a conception of the good that they identify with and work towards. The redefined roles are also informed by personal purpose, which is accepted by and aligned with the higher organisational purpose and general professional values" (Harrison & Galloway, 2005).

As stated in previous chapter CSV is a strategic sustainable approach to leading social progress while serving the self-interest of organisations and gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the community (Porter & Kramer, 2011:76-77). Businesses must strive to achieve economic progress while concurrently improving the social and economic conditions of their surrounding communities (Dezso, 2013:7). Businesses must acknowledge that their ability to thrive is closely intertwined with the health of the communities in which they operate due to the ability of social needs to shape markets and the internal costs that social weaknesses impose on organisations (Porter & Kramer, 2011:65-66).

4.4 A FOCUS ON STAKEHOLDER ACTIVISM

Authors such as Freeman (1984) and Weiss (1994) tend to make the business the centre of attention. It is assumed that the business managers use stakeholder management for analysing its environment, communicating with stakeholder groups and initiating collaboration, if desirable. However, in practice managers are often not masters of their stakeholder interaction. In particular, in multi-stakeholder networks companies tend to be participants that – despite their importance for the network's success – are only partly in control of the process (Roloff, 2008). Other stakeholders can be equally or even more influential in this context. This is due to their expertise or influence concerning the problem or challenge discussed in the network. Coombs (1998: 289) argues that the ease of information sharing on social media has empowered consumers/stakeholders as activists, meaning that these activists have a new weapon, which can change the organisation's stakeholder dynamic on social media when used effectively. According to Mintz (2016), the surge in stakeholder activism seen over the past few years has been decades in the making with the rise of social media, citizen journalism, and near-universal access to publishing tools. These tools range from giving brands the opportunity to join issue conversations on equal footing to more traditional advocacy voices.

Increasingly, organisations aim to nurture stakeholder relationships that are lifelong, built not just on product features but also on shared cultural values. In addition, digital activism made possible by the development of interactive technologies has transformed political protests in the last two decades. Smartphones and access to the internet have changed the way political events, protests and movements are organised, helping to mobilise thousands of new supporters of a diverse range of causes (Karatzogianni, 2016). These new technologies often bypass the existing world of politics, social movements and campaigning. Instead, these new technologies provide an alternative way of organising society and the economy.

To understand activists as important stakeholders, one must first understand the concept of activism. According to Martin (2007: 2) "Activism is action on behalf of a cause, action that goes beyond what is conventional or routine". The action might be door-to-door canvassing, alternative radio, public meetings, rallies or fasting. The cause might be women's rights, opposition to a factory, or world peace, or for the purposes of this discussion affordable internet access. Activists enact their activism through the formation of social movements. Della Porta and Diani (2006) note that activism is a result of social movements, which are a social process through which collective actors articulate their interests, voice grievances and critiques, and propose solutions to identified problems by engaging in a variety of collective actions. These movements typically have three features: they are conflictual and have clearly identified (ideological) opponents; they are structured through dense informal networks; and they are geared towards developing, sustaining and sharing collective identities (Della Porta & Diani, 2006).

Activists use various communication strategies and tactics to influence organisations (Berger, 2005; Stokes & Rubin, 2010). The wide array of tactics used by activists include petitions, boycotts, social media campaigns, letter-writing campaigns and protests (Flanagin, Stohl, & Bimber, 2006; Janssen, 2013; Uysal & Yang, 2013). Meanwhile, a much more private form of activism, shareholder activism, has emerged to directly influence corporate behaviour (Lee & Lounsbury, 2011; Reid & Toffel, 2009). Moving beyond the shareholder norms of passivity, shareholder activists challenge corporations from the inside using institutional mechanisms. As Weber, Rao, and Thomas (2009: 106) put it, these shareholders are 'activists in the suites' rather than 'activists in the streets'. Playing a dual role as the owners of a public company's stock and social activists (Gillan & Starks, 2007), shareholder activists have the means for holding corporate managers accountable to their stakeholders while pushing for more socially responsible business practices.

Increasingly, social and environmental activists are becoming more involved in the corporate governance debate. Many activists have joined forces with shareholder lobby groups to campaign against anti-takeover legislation, CEO-dominated boards and lenient auditors, issues that used to be well beyond the traditional social activism programme (Cespa & Cestone, 2002). Stakeholder activists are increasingly playing an important role as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that are keeping organisations accountable. Activist groups and individual citizens can "hold a corporate logo hostage in the media until shareholders or corporate managers regard the bad publicity as an independent threat to a carefully cultivated brand image" (Bennett, 2003, p. 152; O'Callaghan, 2007).

Mintz (2016) states that today's corporate/stakeholder activists aren't limiting themselves to cautiously phrased "corporate statements" on safe, noncontroversial topics; they're speaking out on prominent issues of the day and taking stands for what they believe in (and that they believe many of their business' customers agree with). This new kind of social movement that is arising due to changing ideologies and expectations from society and organisations in poly-contextual realities emerges as a result of the disintegration of societies. Hollenbeck and Zinkhan (2006) make the point that stakeholder activists often take up the role of anti-brand communities if they

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disagree with an organisation, they take on the role of social activists by voicing their opposition to corporate domination. These activist demonstrations are emerging as a new form of consumer activism and their strategies have received more recognition in recent years as consumer rebellion is viewed as a worldwide social movement (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006: 479). These activists emphasise a consumer's right to protection against adulterated, deficient, or unsafe products and services.

Organisations are actors because society, not only legally but also practically and linguistically, grants them that status (Whetten & Mackey, 2002: 4). Gailewicz (2014) argues for an organisation to connect with its stakeholders meaningfully it has to understand them and learn how its members think, act and purchase, which is only the first step in finding new opportunities to engage with them.

Activism is a 'process by which groups of people exert pressure on organisations or other institutions to change policies, practices, or conditions activists find problematic' (Smith, 2005, p. 5). In the strategic communication literature, activists are often considered an external threat to a corporation (Grunig, 1992; Murphy & Dee, 1992). Scholars treated activist entities as problems that need to be strategically dealt with by managers. Dozier and Lauzen (2000) argued that the strategic communication research on activists had fallen prey to a 'modernist positivist project' whereby domains of study reify power relations in a society.

4.4.1 How stakeholder activists impact organisations

There is a business case for organisations to pay more attention to stakeholder activists as they are not only starting to impact reputation but also revenue. The FastCompany (2017) explains that the Super Bowl ads in 2017 were politically charged, addressing everything from refugees to global warming and multiculturalism. The Super Bowl was politically charged from the advertising, which goes for up to $5 million a spot. Traditionally, Super Bowl ads are known for their creativity and for brands it is a massive stage for them to really flex their advertising chops in ways rarely seen during the year. Much like Budweiser's Super Bowl ad, in any other year, it wouldn't be seen as political or even particularly bold. But we live in times that put added meaning, context and importance on the work brands do. Audi has publicly supported equal pay and established a graduate internship programme requiring 50% female enrolment. It's not that advertising should have to weigh in on political or social issues, but what work like Audi's does illustrate, is that if brands know what their values are – something many marketers have been talking about and advocating for a long time – letting the rest of us know what those values are makes their work that much better.

Additionally, brands such as Apple came out against an anti-LGBTQI+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Intersex) bill under consideration in the North Carolina legislature (Mintz, 2016). This was the latest and arguably most significant stand the company has taken in its growing campaign for LGBT rights. While the law itself had no direct impact on its business, the activism demonstrated by Apple makes one thing clear: Companies are starting to recognise that their customers are not only about what they sell but also about what they stand for, and they are taking stances on social, cultural and political issues. Kelley, Hemphill, and Thams (2018) note that in the past few decades, management scholars have extensively surveyed the interplay between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate financial, while most research holds on the assumption that CSR is likely to improve CFP (corporate financial performance). Corporate reputation, for instance, is a mediating strategic resource between CSR and CFP through which the perceived ability to attend to the institutional demands of stakeholders determines the value of reputation in generating the stakeholder support needed for organisational and institutional performance (Fombrun, 2012).

4.4.2 The case of MTN and the stakeholder activist group #DataMustFall

There is a remarkable shift within the business that expands and sometimes totally disregards the dominant traditional business philosophy being capitalism. Against this background, MTN Group was chosen as a case study because it is one of the dominant players within the telecommunications sector in South Africa. The latest research by P3 Communications shows that MTN has the best network in South Africa, outperforming its rivals in telephony and data services (Mybroadband, 2018), hence the reason MTN is the focus case of this research. The #DataMustFall movement in South Africa is a highly topical issue in the public domain and affects the political, economic and social dynamics of the country. Efforts by this movement have proven to have some direct and indirect effects on the Telecommunication sector and is impacting how business is done in the sector.

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As a premise to understanding the matter at hand, it is important to understand the stakeholder activists at the forefront of the #DataMustFall movement, the Right2Know. The Right2Know Campaign is a South African non-profit advocacy organisation established in 2010 to reduce state secrecy in the drafting of laws, increase access to information and protect freedom of expression, especially on the internet.

As part of this, the campaign monitors and challenges potential legislation that it believes would infringe on personal liberties and transparent government. It is the first such organisation of its kind in post-apartheid South Africa. One of the key agendas it has been driving is activist action against the telecommunication industry. The Right2Know Campaign has led pickets (strikes) outside the offices of the country's four major mobile network providers in Johannesburg, calling for high data and airtime prices to be cut. The civil society organisation is demanding that all South Africans be given access to affordable means of communication. The #DataMustFall movements have also garnered support from other institutions such as the South African Federation of Trade Unions, which says it supports the #DataMustFall pickets. We have also seen similar organisations that are pushing a similar social cause rise and put more pressure and political force on the Telecommunication sector. The efforts of the Righ2Know organisation through the #DataMustFall activist action has proven to be an effective one as ICASA has laid down the law for mobile service providers in the country, namely MTN, Vodacom and Cell C. This followed activist action driven by the #DataMustFall hashtag on social media, which saw telecommunication organisations coming under attack on social media networks. The communications authority (ICASA) said the end-user and Subscriber Service Charter Regulations are underpinned by the general concerns about data expiry and out of bundle data rules, perceived as prejudicial to customers, mostly the poor.

4.4.3 #DataMustFall as a social issue in South Africa

For this discussion, it is important to first identify #DataMustFall as a social issue. According to Kelly (2008), a social issue or problem is an issue that has been recognised by society as a problem that is preventing society from functioning at an optimal level. It is important to understand that not everything that occurs in society is raised to the level of social problems. Kelly further explains that there are four factors that characterise a social issue or problem. These include; the public must recognise the situation as a problem, the situation is against the general values accepted by the society, a large segment of the population recognises the problem as a valid concern and the problem can be rectified or alleviated through the joint action of citizens and/or community resources. In the case of South Africa, when it comes to the cost of data; Matthews (2018) notes that among adult South Africans earning more than R30 000 a month, internet penetration is at 82.4%. Mathews (2018) further notes that “cell phone penetration declines rapidly as income declines, falling to 61.3% for those earning between R14 000 and R18 000 a month, 42% for those earning between R3 000 and R6 000 a month, and below 30% for those earning below R2 500 a month, according to a World Wide Worx and Dark Fibre Africa study”.

#DataMustFall is a social issue as argued by Dr David Harrison in a news article published by IOL (May, 2018), which states that data prices in South Africa are exclusionary as over half of South Africans would have to spend 15% to 40% of their income to buy 1 gigabyte (GB) of mobile data. Furthermore, dropping data prices to R50 per GB would require 33 million South Africans to spend an unaffordable 5% of their income on 1GB of mobile data. Until mobile data prices drop to below R15 per GB it will likely be unaffordable to the majority of South Africans, national development will remain hamstrung and the digital divide is unlikely to be closed.

It is important to note that despite government interventions, including the spending of tens of billions of rands to provide internet access at institutions such as clinics and schools, the majority of South Africans are still not able to afford to access the internet from their homes. This means that over 50% of young people who are unemployed have no regular access to the internet. This creates what is called the digital divide which further widens the gap between the "haves" and "have nots". According to Stanford (2019) the idea of the "digital divide" refers to the growing gap between the underprivileged members of society, especially the poor, rural, elderly and handicapped portion of the population who do not have access to smartphones or computers or the internet. And the wealthy, middle class and young living in urban and suburban areas who do have regular access. This is something that's true in most or all parts of the world. We need to close the digital divide because we need to reduce inequality.

The continuing existence of a digital divide fuelled the UN's attempts to classify internet access as a fundamental human right. A 2016 resolution by the UN Human Rights Council stated its condemnation for countries that take away or disrupt citizens' Internet access. The view of the UN was that internet access gives citizens "vast opportunities for affordable and inclusive education globally," and is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which states technology offers "great potential to accelerate human progress". According to the World Economic Forum (2014), each additional 10% of internet penetration can lead to a 1.2% increase in per capita GDP growth in emerging economies. This potential growth emphasises internet access as a crucial human right. It is therefore imperative to note and acknowledge the widening digital divide caused by various factors such as the cost of data as a social issue (Mathews, 2018).

4.4.4 A look into #DataMustFall activists and the telecommunication

In the attempt to draw parallels between activism (anti-brand activism) and the impact it has on organisations, the discussion below will give an introduction to a case study into the #DataMustFall Movement - activists and the telecommunication Industry. It is also important at this stage to reinforce the research question, which is to explore stakeholder perceptions relating to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy. In this instance the "how" and "why" aim to ascertain stakeholders' perceptions of MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism around the #DataMustFall controversy. The #DataMustFall movement remains a highly political and topical issue in the public arena, there are various concurrent court cases that are yet to be concluded. It is important to note that this research will use documentation as a methodological orientation to understand how the telecommunications industry (MTN) responded to the activist action directed at it.

This also highlights how activist actions are impacting and changing industry legislation and business strategies. Some of the rulings made by ICASA include the new time frames for the expiry of data bundles, with the shortest being 10 days for bundles between 1MB and 50MB, and the longest being 24 months for 20GB; a requirement for licensees to send usage notifications to the end-user when their data is depleted; and for end-users to be able to opt-out or opt-in to out of bundle pricing on data, voice and SMS (Simelane, 2018). Simelane (2018) further argues that the ruling by ICASA also makes provision that users must be sent depletion notifications when their usage is at 50%, 80% and 100%, this is to enable users to monitor their usage and control spending on communication services.

The issues raised by the #DataMustFall movement are central in how stakeholders have a moral expectation from organisations in that they must think and act in a social manner for them to gain social legitimacy. Organisations are actors because society, not only legally but also practically and linguistically, grants them that status, which is also to say it grants them the social licence to operate (Whetten & Mackey, 2002: 4). The issues of data prices speak to the issue of the digital divide and also of ensuring that everyone has access to the internet economy. In discussing #DataMustFall, Fintech24 (2017) notes that in South Africa, income, education and location determine if you're going to become a part of the digital economy, writes Cameron (2017). Income, education and location either open or shut the door to the internet in South Africa today; this matters because the digital divide is getting deeper. Fin24tech (2017) further notes that in the last 12 months, 21 million South Africans (38%) accessed the internet at least once, and 8.4 million (40%) did this for less than 5 hours a week, according to the July report (Internet Access in South Africa, 2017). The advantage of internet access for a national economy is that people are able to transfer, gather and improve large volumes of information. The difference in income between countries that export raw materials, or manufactured goods from those that import them is commonly acknowledged and the same principle applies. Local economic conditions are going from bad to worse. Making the internet more readily available to everyone has never been more urgent.

These activists have also proven to impact not only the reputation but also the revenue streams of the telecommunication organisations in question. According to Beatty (2017) activists are transforming the role of companies and debunking the myth that activist agendas are short term but they are indeed detrimental to long-term value creation. The growing influence of activists on organisations will fundamentally transform how organisations respond and react to activists within the organisation's ecosystem. Lirtsman (2017) argues that for organisations to respond appropriately in activist contexts they simply need to be true to their values. It is not all about politics, but about understanding that businesses in civil society have a responsibility to stand up for what is right.

The shift towards purposeful organisations using the reflective paradigm is a suitable perspective from which to explore how organisations respond to activist contexts. According to Vella (2015:7) a purposeful organisation needs to stand for something it really believes in and that goes beyond profit making. It is important to note that this is only applicable if the organisation subscribes to this principle – they should, but many still only value profit (in line with shareholders' demands). Roll (2015:3) argues that organisations that claim to be purposeful come from a better understanding and are interested in structures that are transpersonal and sustainable over a long time in changing circumstances. Cramer, Van der Heijden and Jonker (2006: 3) state that purposeful organisations deliberately orient their business activities towards value creation in three dimensions, Profit, People and Planet and move towards contributing to societal welfare in the long run. It is also about maintaining a relationship with diverse stakeholders on the basis of transparency and dialogue, thereby answering justifiable questions for society. They are points of connection and field spaces from which new directions can emerge. The elements of purposeful intent inherent in strategic communication clarify the purpose-driven nature of an organisation's messages (Aggerholm & Thomsen, 2016: 3). To a large extent, the purposefulness of an organisation is about driving sustainability achieved through organisational strategy and the idea of sustainability becoming a natural element of their actions and not an issue separate from the strategy being executed.

4.5 CONCLUSION

There is no denying the vital role of stakeholders in the survival of organisations, as their power increases it is necessary to re-evaluate and develop strategies to engage them meaningfully. Stakeholders are increasingly placing pressure on organisations to act in a way that is not harmful to society as a whole (environmentally, socially and economically). Organisations can also no longer adopt a one-sided mono-contextual perception of their realities but must take into account the negotiated meaning and multiple viewpoints of the institutions and individuals with which they interact.

In acknowledging the limited perspective of organisation-focused Stakeholder theory, organisations should simultaneously practice both organisation-focused and issue-focused stakeholder management, as argued by Roloff (2008). Issue-focused stakeholder management explains how an organisation acts in the same capacity as other stakeholders to address an issue of shared concern through "shared course of action communication" (Roloff, 2008: 245-247). Holmström (2006:9) elaborates further that contingent decision-making by organisations based on responsibility is able to inspire the trust of stakeholders, particularly in an uncertain and risky environment. Organisations attain l legitimacy through alignment with society's social norms, values, institutions and expectations (Holmström et al., 2010:8). It is also important to note that stakeholder theory is limited in that it places emphasis on the organisation as the focal point – in that stakeholders are identified either through their relationship with the organisation or through "claiming a stake" in the organisation (Roloff, 2008:235).

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to explore the methodological orientation of this study. According to Du Plooy (2009:21), a methodology refers to the research strategy used for a phenomena or study, there are two main research methodologies, namely qualitative and quantitative. Against the theoretical background of the literature discussed in the preceding chapters, this chapter begins with the formulation of the main research problem to be investigated. This research problem is further subdivided into research sub-questions addressing different aspects of the main research problem. The sub-questions are translated into the research aims to be investigated in this study.

The discussion of the non-probability sampling method used – purposive sampling is referred to – where the sample for the case study is MTN Group, the reason for this is that this is one of the key role players within the telecommunications sector in South Africa. The evaluative phase of data analysis, including the phases of data condensation, data display and verification or conclusion drawing are also reviewed and applied. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the various criteria of reliability and validity, indicates how these criteria were met in this study, and also refers to the ethical considerations that were adhered to in carrying out this research.

5.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The methodological orientation of this research starts with determining the research problem. According to Kowalczyk (2003) "A research question is an answerable inquiry into a specific concern or issue. It is the initial step in a research project". The initial step means after you have an idea of what you want to study, the research question is the first active step in the research project (Kowalczyk: 2003). "A research problem is a statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or in practice that points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation" (Bryman, 1994: 105-117). Furthermore, it is important to note that a research problem does not state how to do something, offer a vague or broad proposition, or present a value question.

The research problem of the study is as follows: "To explore stakeholder perceptions relating to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy".

5.3 RESEARCH SUB-QUESTIONS

Sub questions are narrower questions that answer research questions. The research sub-questions to be investigated to answer the research problem above are as follows:

5.3.1 What are stakeholder perceptions of MTN's online narratives relating to stakeholder activism as a response strategy in the #DataMustFall controversy on Facebook and Twitter?

5.3.2 What are stakeholder perceptions of MTN’s responses to activists’ communication on social media platforms such as Twitter?

5.3.3 What principles are MTN using to guide its online narratives relating to stakeholder activism as a response strategy in the #DataMustFall controversy?

5.4 RESEARCH AIMS

Based on the research sub-questions, the research aims to be investigated in this study are as follows:

5.4.1 To establish stakeholder reactions to MTN’s online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy.

5.4.2 To establish how MTN Group adopts the principles of the reflective paradigm.

5.4.3 To establish how MTN Group responds to stakeholder activism.

5.4.4 To ascertain how MTN Group practices corporate social responsibility and shared value.

5.5 THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

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The following theoretical statements are derived from the literature review and form the theoretical foundation for the research questions to be answered and aims to be achieved. The research focus of this study is guided by three key factors: the reflective paradigm as a meta-theoretical statement, the emerging paradigm of strategic communication and stakeholder activism. The theoretical statements are then stated, followed by discussions of the abductive research strategy, constructionist epistemological orientation, as well as the idealist ontological orientation applied in this study. Since this study is exploratory in nature and the researcher aimed to explore what is known about a lesser-known subjects, the qualitative case study methodological orientation is justified and is applied. These concepts will be briefly defined below:

Reflective paradigm: According to Holmström (2005: 6), the reflective paradigm as we have come to know it alludes to counter-concepts that represent different ways of how an organisation (or another social system) observes itself and the world, which seem to be a key to understanding social responsibility as basically a specific worldview.

Strategic communication: The emerging paradigm of strategic communication is discussed as the most suitable theoretical perspective from which to explore the pressure on organisations to address social issues as it draws attention to the role of communication professionals as organisational agents who represent the conscience of the organisation (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373; Holtzhausen, 2000:101-105).

Stakeholder activism: According to Hollenbeck and Zinkhan (2006) stakeholder activists demonstrations an emerging new form of consumer activism. Their activist strategies have received more recognition in recent years as consumer rebellion is viewed as a worldwide social movement (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006: 479). They emphasise a consumer's right to be protected against adulterated, deficient, or unsafe products and services.

5.6 RESEARCH STRATEGY

According to Jenny (2014) "A research strategy is a step-by-step plan of action that gives direction to the researcher's thoughts and efforts, enabling the researcher to conduct research systematically and on schedule to produce quality results and detailed reporting. Furthermore, (Datt, 2016) states that a research strategy enables the researcher to answer the research questions or the elementary questions that shape the flow and structure of the study. Therefore, the necessity for deploying a research strategy is based on the aims and objectives of the study. Saunders et al. (2009) has emphasised that the choice of research strategy is guided by the research questions and objectives. Similarly, the extent of existing knowledge, the availability of time, as well as philosophical underpinnings are also important.

The research strategy adopted in this study takes the form of a case study that aims to answer the questions of "why" and "how" (Blaikie, 2009:89) through incorporating the accounts of social actors by paying attention to their use of language and the meanings attributed to it. Furthermore, this research will be exploring qualitative case study methods to conduct case study research. According to Yin (2003a: 2), "the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" because "the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events," such as organisational and managerial processes. Baxter and Jack (2010: 3) state that qualitative case study methodology provides tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2010: 3).

A case study is an empirical in-depth inquiry about an individual, family, group or organisation. A case study is mainly used to explain the causal links in real-life intervention that are too complex for either the survey or experimental strategies. Like other research strategies, its design includes questions or propositions, units of analysis, the logic linking the data to the questions or propositions, and the interpretation of the outcomes (Yin, 2003).

There are two key approaches that guide case study methodology; one is proposed by Stake (1995) and the second by Robert Yin (2003, 2006). Both seek to ensure that the topic of interest is well explored and that the essence of the phenomenon is revealed, but the methods they each employ are quite different and are worthy of discussion. A case study can be reported as a single case or as the compilation of a series of cases.

Case study qualitative research study methodology was chosen as a key research strategy because it aims to uncover a phenomena within its context. In this case, the phenomenon being MTN's online responses and the context or environment in this instance is stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy. Additionally, a single case study with embedded units is the chosen type of case study methodology for this paper. The reason for using a single case study is because one organisation within the telecommunication industry, MTN, was chosen as the focus of the research. This means that the researcher is able to explore the case with the ability to analyse the data within the case analysis, between the case analyses and make a cross-case analysis (Gustafsson, 2017).

5.7 METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

According to Kohlbacher (2006) "the ambiguity about a case study being either or both a methodology and method is compounded by the terminology used in discussions about case study". Across the literature, case study is referred to as a methodology and a method, an approach, research and research design, research strategy, and/or a form of inquiry (Anthony & Jack, 2009; Brown, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Gerring, 2004; Merriam, 2009; Simons, 2009, Stake, 1995, 2006; Stewart, 2014; Yin, 2014). A further challenge to understanding case study research relates to it being referred to and used as both a methodology and a method. Mills (2014) distinguishes methods as procedures and techniques employed in the study, while methodology is the lens through which the researcher views and makes decisions about the study.

Furthermore, Kohlbacher (2006) notes that a case study is therefore more qualitative than quantitative in nature, but not exclusively, for it can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both approaches (with both represented equally or one approach prevailing and the other supplementing). Qualitative and quantitative results should complement each other to create a meaningful whole according to the object and purpose of the investigation in case study methodology (Sagadin 2004:89). Considering these fundamental elements and common approaches to case study research, the definition from Creswell et al. (2007) seems to best capture the full depth and breadth of case study concepts and descriptions. As stated by Kohlbacher (2006: 245), case study is "a methodology, a type of design in qualitative research, an object of study and a product of the inquiry". He concludes with a definition that collates the hallmarks of key approaches and represents the core features of a case study. This definition is as follows "Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (for example, observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports) and reports a case description and case-based themes" (Kohlbacher, 2006).

In case study research, it is helpful to consider whether the case study will be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory and a key decision to be made is whether the research will be based on a single case study or on multiple cases (Hartley, 2004: 326). Since the case study method receives criticism in terms of its lack of robustness as a research tool, crafting the design of case studies is of paramount importance. Researchers can adopt either a single-case or multiple-case design depending on the issue in question. In cases where there are no other cases available for replication, the researcher can adopt a single-case design. The multiple-case design, on the other hand, can be adopted for real-life events that show numerous sources of evidence through replication rather than sampling logic. According to Yin (1994), replicating the case through pattern matching, a technique linking several pieces of information from the same case to some theoretical proposition (Campbell, 1975); multiple-case design enhances and supports the previous results. For the purpose of this study, a single case study design will be employed.

This study aims to analyse communication on social media to ascertain stakeholder perceptions of MTN's online responses to the stakeholder activism of the #DataMustFall controversy. In this instance, the "how" and "why" which incorporates the accounts of social actors by paying attention to their use of language and the meanings attributed to it as stated by (Blaikie, 2009: 89) which are important in case study research aims to ascertain stakeholders' perceptions of MTN's online response to stakeholder activism around the #DataMustFall controversy. One of the reason for this is because the #DataMustFall movement remains a highly political and topical issue in the South African public arena, there are various concurrent court processes running, hence the decision to use an exploratory case study. It is important to note that this research is a case study on the #DataMustFall movement and how the MTN Group responded to these activists' action directed at the company. A single case study with embedded units will be used for the study, a single case embedded unit has the ability to look at subunits within a larger case, considering that data can be analysed within the subunits separately (within case analyses), between the different subunits (between case analyses), or across all of the subunits (cross-case analyses). Stake (1995) further notes that understanding a case study usually requires extensive examining of how things get done, but the prime referent in a case study is the case, not the methods by which the case operates. In this instance, for the research under question, the case is MTN's online response to the #DataMustFall controversy.

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5.8 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population and sampling are critical components of research, the section below will explain in detail how the sample and population of the study will be carried out. Population – the group of people or the area you are investigating – and the sample (the subset of the population you are studying) are both important research principles (Seawright & Gerring, 2008: 295-296). Both apply in case study research. According to Seawright and Gerring (2008: 295-296) the selection of cases has the same objectives as random sampling in that what is desired is a representative sample and useful variation on the dimensions of theoretical interest. However, given the difficulties of getting a representative case, on both practical and theoretical grounds, they suggest that purposive sampling may be more appropriate.

According to Omona (2013), sampling, as it relates to research, refers to the selection of individuals, units, and/or settings to be studied. Whereas quantitative studies strive for random sampling, qualitative studies often use purposeful or criterion-based sampling; that is, a sample that has the characteristics relevant to the research question(s). "Purposeful sampling is generally used in case study research; therefore, it explains sampling procedures and case selection, and the defining characteristics and typicality or atypicality of the case: one needs to note whether the case in question is a deviant or extreme case, a critical case, a convenience case, a politically significant case, and so on" (Creswell, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Furthermore, because attrition may have a deep effect on longitudinal case studies based on just one or two participants, sampling carefully is crucial. If multiple cases are used, researchers often provide a detailed account of each and then some form of cross-case comparison, either in prose or in a tabular summary (Creswell, 1998).

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Multiple cases are often preferable to single cases, particularly when the cases may not be representative of the population from which they are drawn and when a range of behaviours/ profiles, experiences, outcomes, or situations is desirable. However, including multiple cases limits the depth with which each case can be analysed and also has implications for the structure and length of the final report. For the purposes of this research, a single case study will be explored. If the researcher only wants to study one single thing (for example one organisation within a certain industry) or a single group (for example a group of people), a single case study is the best choice (Yin, 2003). This leads into the chosen sample of the research, which is MTN Group (which in an entity in the broader industry of telecommunications). The reason is that this is one of the key role players within the telecommunications sector in South Africa. This is supported by the latest research by P3 Communications shows that MTN has the best network in South Africa, outperforming its rivals in telephony and data services (Mybroadband, 2018). Furthermore, the study will look at documentation analysis and therefore does not require purposive or non-probability sampling (the section will be covered in more details under the data analysis section).

5.9 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection as stated by (Creswell, 2009: 45) is a plan that describes how, when and where the data is to be collected and analysed. Stake (1995) contends that it is incumbent upon case study researchers to draw their data from multiple sources to capture the case under study in its complexity and entirety. As for the tools used to gather data, in the epistemological tradition they are subscribed to influence their selection and how they conceive the entire data gathering process. Stake (1995) also notes that for many researchers, there are no clear stages in data collection methods, issue development occurs towards the end of the study, and write-ups begin with preliminary observations. However, in case studies research typically includes multiple data collection techniques and data are collected from multiple sources. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations (direct and participant), questionnaires, and relevant documents (Yin, 2014) and patterns can be uncovered.

Yin (2003) says there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts (Yin, 2003: 83, 85-96). Indeed, the case study's unique strength is "its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence—documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (Yin, 2003: 8). Data collection, and in general the execution of a good case study, depend crucially on the competence of the researcher. In case study research, the data collected are usually qualitative (words, meanings, views) but can also be quantitative (descriptive numbers, tables).

The use of multiple data collection techniques and sources strengthens the credibility of outcomes and enables different interpretations and meanings to be included in data analysis. This is known as triangulation (Flick, 2014). Because documentation analysis is chosen as the research design, it has a direct impact on the data collection method. This study is based on qualitative material and therefore secondary sources. This includes scientific articles, case studies and other literature. Document analysis is a social research method and is an important research tool in its own right, and is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation, the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Bowen, 2009). In order to seek convergence and corroboration, qualitative researchers usually use at least two resources through using different data sources and methods. The purpose of triangulating is to provide a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility (Bowen, 2009). Corroborating findings across data sets can reduce the impact of potential bias by examining information collected through different methods.

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment of a topic (Bowen, 2009). Analysing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to the way focus group or interview transcripts are analysed (Bowen: 2009). A rubric can also be used to grade or score documents. In the document analysis, the study benefited from the variety of documents made available by company officials. The researcher collects the data with the objective of gathering multiple sources of evidence with reference to the problem under study. This evidence is stored comprehensively and systematically in a format that can be referenced and sorted easily so that converging lines of inquiry (Shanks & Bekmamedova, 2018). These documents were: policy handbooks, company official histories, company journals (such as monthly newsletters or magazines), collective agreements, annual reports, and minutes of meetings, company annual reports, and company tweets (for a specific period). It should be noted that not all of these documents were in a compiled form; rather, the researcher had to inspect and extract the data that was relevant to the requirements of the research. Furthermore, these documents were particularly useful in providing additional information on the companies investigated (Rose: 2002).

It is important to note that the study set out to find out online perceptions of stakeholders; this means documentation/social media commentary for the one-year period from 1 September 2016 to the 31 September 2017. The Documents and commentary from various sources such as ICASA, MTN Group, Right2Know campaign, media articles and social media commentary will be collated and analysed. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 35), documentary analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings that may be revealed by their style and coverage. This is particularly useful where the history of events or experiences has relevance and where events cannot be studied by direct observation or interviewing (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 35).

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Data collection should be guided by a case study protocol (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This protocol needs to include the following sections:

1. An overview of the case study project.

2. Field procedures, such as the use of different sources of information, and arrangements to access these sources.

3. Case study questions, or the questions that the case study researcher needs to keep in mind when collecting data. In complex cases studies it is important to differentiate between the questions asked of specific interviewees and those used to interrogate documents, questions asked of the individual case, and questions to be asked across multiple cases.

5.10 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Hartley (1994: 2004, 220, 329), data collection and analysis are "developed together in an iterative process", which can be a strength as it allows for theory development that is grounded in empirical evidence. A careful description of the data and the development of categories in which to place behaviours or processes have proven to be important steps in the process of analysing the data. The data may then be organised around certain topics, key themes or central questions and, finally, the data need to be examined to see how far they fit or fail to fit the expected categories (Hartley: 1994). In general, "data analysis means a search for patterns in data" (Neuman, 1997: 426). Once a pattern is identified, it is interpreted in terms of a social theory or the setting in which it occurred and the qualitative researcher moves from the description of a historical event or social setting to a more general interpretation of its meaning. According to Yin (2003: 111-115), there are three general analytic strategies for analysing case study evidence: Relying on theoretical propositions; thinking about rival explanations; and developing a case description. He contends that any of these strategies can be used in practicing five specific techniques for analysing case studies: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models and cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2003: 109, 116-137). The methods of data analysis will be both qualitative and quantitative content analysis.

5.11 CONTENT ANALYSIS

For the purposes of this study both qualitative and quantitative content analysis will be used to analyse tweets with the hashtag #DataMustFall from the period 1st September 2016 to 31st of October 2017. Content analysis refers to a family of procedures for the systematic, replicable analysis of text. In essence it involves the classification of parts of a text through the application of a structured, systematic coding scheme from which conclusions can be drawn about the message content (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). The application of content analysis is done by clearly specifying the coding and other procedures content analysis is replicable in the sense that other researchers could reproduce the study.

Content analysis is valuable in organisational research because it allows researchers to recover and examine the nuances of organisational behaviours, stakeholder perceptions, and societal trends. It is also an important bridge between purely quantitative and purely qualitative research methods. According to Rose, Spinks and Canhoto (2015) Content analysis is data collection technique as well as a data analysis techniques. It helps to understand information as symbolic phenomenon. It is used to investigate symbolic content such as words that appear in, for example, newspapers, comments on a blog, political speeches and so on. Furthermore, (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto) note that content analysis involves the classification of parts of a text through the application of a structured, systematic coding scheme from which conclusions can be drawn about the message content. By clearly specifying the coding and other procedures content analysis is replicable in the sense that other researchers could reproduce the study. “Content analysis can be applied to all kinds of written text such as speeches, letters or articles whether digital or in print, as well as text in the form of pictures, video, film or other visual media. It can be used to examine both the manifest and the latent content of a text. Manifest content refers to the visible, countable components of the message. Latent content refers to the meaning that may lie behind the manifest content" (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto 2015).

When using content analysis in case study research, triangulation takes place on two different levels. On the first and more obvious level, data is triangulated by integrating different material and evidence that is often collected by using various methods—as well as by integrating quantitative and qualitative steps of analysis. On the second level, triangulation takes place by applying a method of analysis (qualitative content analysis) that has not been specifically developed for this purpose but for a different research design (case study research) (Kohlbacher, 2006). In the final step, the results and findings of the case study need to be brought to closure. This step is called reporting, with numerous forms of reports being available; a typical case study report is a lengthy narrative (Yin, 981: 64; 2003: 141). Stake (2000: 436) notes that a "case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry", namely the report. Content analysis can be carried out quantitatively but also qualitatively. For the purposes of this research we focus on both quantitative content analysis and qualitative content analysis.

A set of mass media documents (freely available to the public) will be analysed using qualitative content analysis; external documents from MTN Group (press releases and submission papers to the competition commission), and Online newspaper articles relating to #DataMustFall. Zhang and Wildemath (2009: 319) state that qualitative content analysis pays attention to unique themes that illustrate the range of the meanings of the phenomena rather than the statistical significance of the occurrence of particular texts or concepts. Qualitative content analysis is used to explore and identify overt and covert themes and patterns embedded in a particular text. Furthermore, Boettger and Palmer (2010) states that quantitative content analysis provides a method to isolate trends and make the directionality of these trends explicit. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011: 397) describes qualitative data analysis as "the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to mass data. There are several ways of analysing qualitative data. When we say that qualitative data collection and interpretation are constructed and symbolic, we mean that both the researcher as research instrument and participant interpret phenomena subjectively and express it symbolically. Qualitative content analysis defines itself within this framework as an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification (Mayring, 2000). "Content analysis can be applied to all kinds of written text such as speeches, letters or articles whether digital or in print, as well as text in the form of pictures, video, film or other visual media. It can be used to examine both the manifest and the latent content of a text. Manifest content refers to the visible, countable components of the message. Latent content refers to the meaning that may lie behind the manifest content" (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto 2015).

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The second type of content analysis that will be used for this research is quantitative content analysis. For the purpose of this quantitative content analysis will be used to analyse the twitter hashtag of #DataMustFall over a one-year period (1st September 2016 to 31 September 2017), together with any social media commentary around this period. The reason for this is because the #DataMustFall issue started to trend on social media around that time. "Quantitative content analysis requires formal properties such as word frequencies, space measurements, time counts, hashtags, number of tagged people in an image, number of friends, or liked pages. The objects of analysis may vary from traditional textual content (messages, bibliometrics, citation analysis/indexing, webpages, trending topics on twitter), to any media object with specified formal properties or metadata (video, photographs, and phone conversations)" (Binsbergen: 2013). Binsbergen (2013) notes that there are at least three important distinctions from qualitative content analysis arise as a result of this. First, quantitative analysis is better suited for closed inquiries, and typically results in emergent categories rather than manually assigned categories. Second, as a result of focussing only on formal properties, quantitative content analysis typically applies to manifest contents (literal content) rather than its latent meaning (implied content). Thirdly, the researcher often requires instruments to measure and count (e.g. a computer), the reliability (every research will get the same results) and validity (it measures what it is supposed to measure) of the apparatus and techniques (e.g. its software) should always be reflected upon as part of the research (Binsbergen, 2013).

It is also important to note that thematic analysis which is often used interchangeably with quantitative data analysis will also be used in analysis the data quantitatively. Thematic analysis refers to this method of transforming the symbolic content of a document, such as word or other images from a qualitative, unsystematic form into a quantitative, systematic form (Monette et al, 2002: 207). For this research, once the common themes are identified, a summary of the transcripts based on the multiple methods will be analysed for common themes (concepts, perspectives/responses) – thus a thematic analysis will be undertaken. It is also important to note that because there are other forms of analysing data, coding will also be used as a form of data analysis. Coding is a method of connecting data, issues, interpretations, data sources and report writing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This analysis is done in a form of content analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) as explained in detail above. The section below will explain how the validity and reliability of the study will be determined.

5.12 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

According to Miles et al. (2014:311-315) and Huberman and Miles (1994), qualitative data must be assessed against five criteria to determine the reliability and validity of the research study. As the purpose of the study is to find out stakeholder perceptions relating to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy, validity and reliability were achieved by meeting the criteria of conformability, credibility, dependability and application. Attaining transferability was not regarded as a focus within this study. The description of these criteria by Miles et al. (2014) and Huberman and Miles (1994) is discussed below, along with the application of the criteria in the context of this study. Furthermore, triangulation provides an important way of ensuring the validity of case study research. Normally, data collection methods are triangulated (many methods are combined), but in addition to this, data sources, theory, or investigations might also be triangulated (Denzin 1978).

The verification or trustworthiness of the research findings will consist of validity and reliability of the data set. Reliability consists of the degree to which the research conducted can yield an identical set of results if replicated (Bloor & Wood, 2006: 2). According to Bloor & Wood (2006: 2) the validity of a data set consists of the degree to which the research "produces an accurate version of the world". The trustworthiness of qualitative data is often tested through the following representations: credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability and authenticity (Elo, et al, 2014: 1). The application of trustworthiness in the context of this research will be applied by understanding the research and its findings in the context of strategic communication as a discipline. Furthermore, when documents are studied, it is important that the researcher evaluates their authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. The researcher should establish the authenticity of a document, namely ensuring that it was produced by the author or body ascribed to it (Jupp, 2006: 80).

For a qualitative research community, a case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and pays close attention to the influence of its social, political and other contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2010). It is also important to note that optimising understanding of the case requires paying meticulous attention to its activities. It is therefore the aim of this paper to give a case study analysis into the #DataMustFall movement and how it has affected MTN.

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5.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Case study research must also effectively communicate the confidential nature of the research and take extra precautions to ensure participants' right to privacy – which can be particularly challenging when only one case is the focal point of research (for example, a city's social programme) (Stake, 2000).

Because documentation study will be used, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 285-286) recommend the following:

If the author of the document is still alive, they may ask that we read the entire document and give an auto critique.

It is sometimes possible to compare the relevant document with other written documents or data collected in other ways. According to Sudeshna and Datt (2016), ethical considerations require values like accountability, trust, mutual respect and fairness among all the parties involved in a study. For this study, ethical considerations include:

Safeguarding collected information: Researcher should collect data and the researcher shoud avoid the use of faulty equipment to ensure accuracy (Sudeshna & Datt, 2016: 2).

According to Baxter and Jack (2010), case studies often deal with matters that are of public interest but for which there is no public interest and neither is there a public nor scholarly right to know. Given the politicisation and public contentions surrounding the "Data Must Fall versus the Telecommunication Industry" controversy this might pose difficulties with "openness" "full disclosure" and "honesty" as the issue is now seen by the regulators as within court processes.

Following guidelines and avoiding plagiarism: It is crucial for the researcher to follow guidelines before initiating a study. If the researcher finds the data to be erroneous then it is the responsibility of the researcher to correct the data (Sudeshna & Datt, 2016: 2).

5.14 CONCLUSION

When choosing a methodological position, careful consideration of the different case study approaches is required to determine the design that best addresses the aim of the study and aligns with the researcher's worldview (Harrison, Birks, Franklin & Mills, 2007). Zainal (2007) notes that case study research through reports of past studies allows the exploration and understanding of complex issues. It can be considered a robust research method, particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required. The goal of this alignment is to engender coherence between the researcher's philosophical position, their research question, design and the methods to be used in the study (Farquhar, 2012; Luck et al., 2006; Stewart, 2014; Yin, 2014). To assist in understanding and achieving this alignment, the qualitative case study approaches developed by Yin (2014), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998, 2009) are explored in order to conduct case study research. As such, participants are required to reflect and make sense of their encounters and knowledge derived from their respective organisations and to share these encounters with the researcher. The researcher must then derive meaning from these subjective interpretations without imposing biases on the gathered data.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights and discusses the findings of the study. The aim of the study was to exploring stakeholder perceptions relating to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy. A case study methodological orientation was adopted as the base of this study and MTN Group was chosen as sample and population due to the fact that it was declared one of the largest telecommunication organisation in Africa. Because this research takes the course of documentation study, the use of multiple data collection techniques and sources strengthens the credibility of outcomes and enables different interpretations and meanings to be included in data analysis. The findings gathered from data collected are analysed using both qualitative and quantitative content analysis. Themes were grouped into their relevant categories and arranged according to the highest frequency in a descending order down to the lowest frequency. Please refer to APPENDIX A to see how the data was quantitatively analysed. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings and their usefulness in answering each research sub-question. The answers discussed in relation to each research sub-question are then collectively referred to in order to answer the research problem. Subsequently, the methodological limitations of this study, recommendations for future research as well as recommendations for future of #DataMustFall issue are also referred to.

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6.2 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS (THEMATIC ANALYSIS) OF ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA ARTICLES ON #DataMustFall

The below discussion is a thematic analysis of online media articles concerning the #DataMustFall movement. This study examined a total of 24 news articles that appeared in nine online newspapers over a twelve month (1 year) 01/08/2016 to 31/09/2017, the reason for this specific period is because the #DataMustFall issue gained traction in the beginning of September 2016 after tweets from public figure (celebrity) Tbo Touch lamenting about the cost of mobile data prices. The reason for 24 articles is because two articles for each of the twelve months were selected from online media houses due to their prominence, this was done through google filter search. In addition, a total of nine online publications were selected because they had an extensive coverage of the #DataMustFall issue. The online media articles were collected and analysed using the six-phased guide of thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) provide the following six-phase guide which was used in this study as a foundation in conducting thematic analysis. A quick view of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase guide in completing thematic analysis is provided in figure 6.2.1 below.

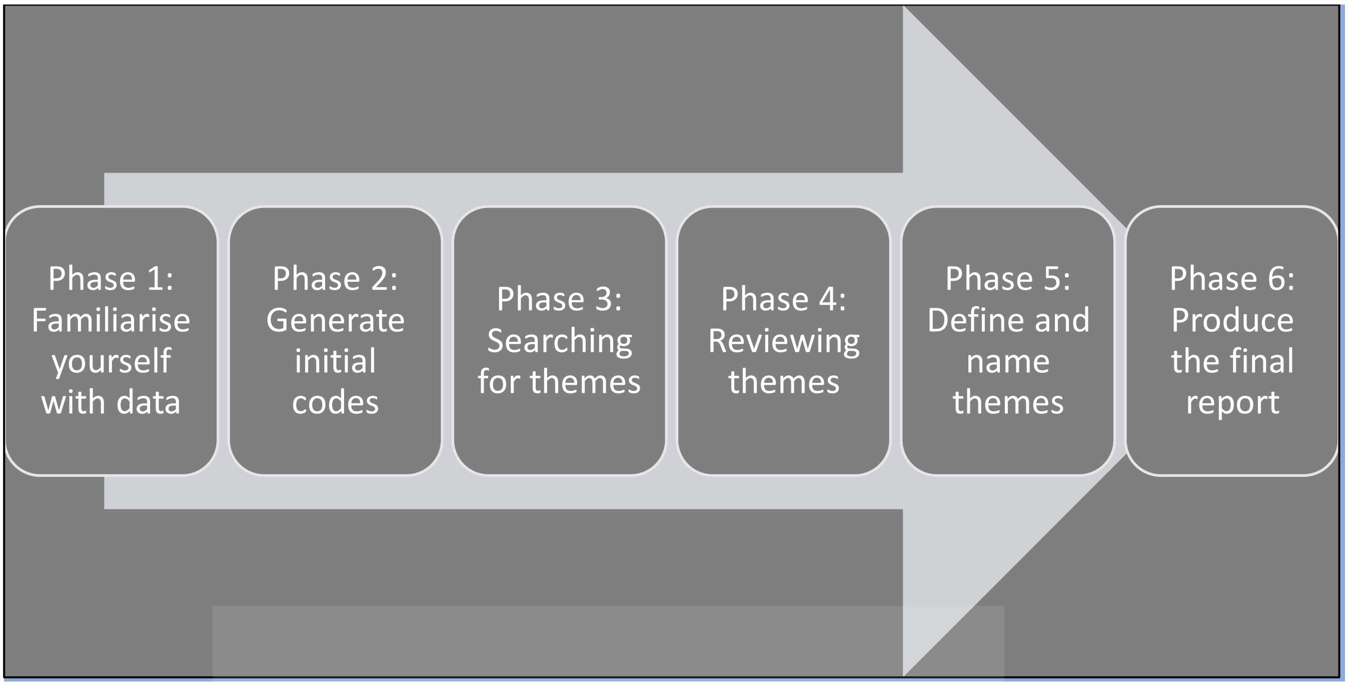

Figure 6.1: Braun and Clarke's (2006) Six-Phase Guide to Thematic Analysis

Phase one: "Familiarizing yourself with your data, is focused on reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

Phase two: "Generating initial codes: coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

Phase three: "Searching for themes, collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

Phase four: begins when you have devised a set of candidate themes, and it involves the refinement of those themes. During this phase, it will become evident that some candidate themes are not really themes (e.g., if there are not enough data to support them, or the data are too diverse), while others might collapse into each other (e.g., two apparently separate themes might form one theme) (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Phase five: "Defining and naming themes, ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definition and names for each theme" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

Phase six: "Producing the report: the final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, completing extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research questions and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). A total of 24 online media articles were collected and analysed in comparison with the literature review and codes were generated and developed into themes. The following sections discuss the themes identified in the analysis of the online media selected for the purposes of the study:

6.2.1 Theme 1: Access to the Internet as a human right

In the literature it is stated that “In July 2016 the U.N. issued a declaration applying a comprehensive human rights-based approach when providing and expanding access to the internet and for the internet to be open, accessible and nurtured" (Sandle, 2016). The resolution did not receive universal backing, with several countries rejecting the resolution. Notably these were Russia, China and South Africa. This UN declaration comes at the back drop that the Internet is so embedded in the lives of so many people, acting as the main way for information exchange, that to deny access to everyone in the world is a breach of human rights according to the United Nations. This kind of thinking is strongly reflected in the online media articles and research reports following the wide spread controversy of the #DataMustFall movement. The two studies that were analyzed found that “South Africa is one of the few countries globally burdened with excessive costs to communicate”. This was supported by media articles that unanimously stated that South African mobile data prices were very high, with some quoting comparative prices of 1GB of data in India, Nigeria, and Namibia to substantiate their point.

Furthermore, four media articles suggested that telecommunication companies are committing a crime and contributing to the broadening inequalities that exist in South Africa due to mobile data cots. An online article from eNCA online was quoted “People in remote rural areas, unemployed people, elderly people, kids, all of them even those on very low incomes are starting to use the internet and often everyday of their lives. But they can’t use it the way they want to due to data costs”. The sentiment that access to the internet is an essential human right is further reinforced by the literature with (De Klerk and Verwey, 2013) stating that web 2.0 brought with it the digital revolution as everything that was traditionally done in analogue way is being digitised (De Klerk & Verwey (2013). A key element of the relevant technology is that it allows people to create, share, collaborate and communicate with the objective of identifying solutions to problems they face on a daily basis (Thomson, 2018). With that being said it becomes very apparent that having no access to these technologies becomes a critical component in people operating their daily tasks. In this case mobile data is a critical enabler in making sure that people are participating in this digital economy.

6.2.2 Theme 2: The cost of mobile data contributes to socio-economic challenges

This theme is closely tied to the first theme, and literature and online media coverage around #DataMust Fall suggests that the cost of mobile data is also closely linked to socio-economic challenges in South Africa. Research ICT Africa in their research on the cost of data in South Africa puts it eloquently as they state that “So if we expect South Africa to bring its entire population online as a first step to helping the country benefit from the digital economy and society, then reducing the costs of access is essential,” the organisation said. It also said lack of leadership and dearth of policy implementation had left the mobile operators with the freedom to charge more than what could be charged. The study further found that South Africa ranks 35th in Africa, out of 50 ranked countries, with an average 1GB prepaid mobile data charge of $7.84. Indeed it is very clear from media reports that “Most South Africans who can access the internet live in cities and suburbs and are relatively wealthy. Those of us who are poorer and living in more rural areas, on average, are less able to access the knowledge, information and opportunities to be found there” (Du Plooy, 2017). So the issue of mobile data cost is a contributor to socio-economic challenges given that economic activity is becoming more digitised. We also see this point poignantly in one article stating that, “When the costs of telecommunications including data are high, small businesses can be forced to close shop or lay off personnel. When the private health care system fixes prices for life saving drugs and overcharges for admissions, individuals and families find themselves compelled to use the already overburdened public health system” (BusinessTech, 2017).

This finding goes against one of the central value of Purposefulness suggested by the emerging paradigm of Strategic Communication. Strategic communication emphasises the importance of purpose-driven organisations. Vella (2015: 7) notes that a purposeful organisation needs to stand for something it really believes in and that goes beyond profit making. Murray (2016) and Christian, Velleman and Mackay (2013:2) also note that a distinctive purpose is the result of the organisation being driven by its authentic higher intent whereby its actions are more important than its communications. Roll (2015:3) argues that organisations that claim to be purposeful come from a better understanding and are interested in structures that are transpersonal, and are sustainable over a long time in changing circumstances. One online article found that "It's challenging for citizens, because we prefer buying data or airtime, for that matter, instead of buying bread," stating that communication should be cheaper, as the poor were most affected, and that telecommunications companies were making large profits. "It is outrageous that, in a country where so many struggle to put bread on the table, the telecoms Companies are given free rein to rip us off," said Right2Know in a statement.

6.2.3 Theme 3: Stakeholders expect organisations to become more socially responsible

In the literature it becomes very apparent that Stakeholders have become hard to please and even more complex to understand. This becomes more apparent in the literature review that indicates the increase in stakeholder activism. These so called stakeholder activist’s demonstrations are emerging as a new form of consumer activism and these activist strategies have received more recognition in recent years as consumer rebellion is viewed as a worldwide social movement (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006: 479). These activists emphasise a consumer’s right for protection against adulterated, deficient, or unsafe products and services. Organisations

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are actors because society, not only legally but also practically and linguistically, grants them that status, which is also to say it grants them the social license to operate (Whetten & Mackey, 2002: 4).

Throughout the literature in this study it has been clear that stakeholders from consumers, government, regulators and media expect more from organisations. In the literature the concept of the virtuous organisation is strongly highlighted. The virtuous organisation perspective addresses sustainability and the need for organisations to be socially responsible because of the extensive influence they have on society (Willenius, 2005:138-142). A key argument is that they should focus on ethics in demonstrating concern for the future and the well-being of humanity (Fuller & Tilley, 2005:184; 195-196).

In the media reports that were collected it is very apparent judging from the "Picketing" that took place outside key telecommunication companies head offices that if an organization is not virtuous or seen to be it will be forced to be. It is reported that the "Right2Know led pickets outside the four major telecommunications companies in Gauteng". Furthermore, Mmamoloko Kubayi, the chairperson of the portfolio committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services was quoted as having said the telecommunications operators have a month to 'get their act together'. Suggesting that the organisation's are not acting and behaving as their stakeholders expect them to be.

6.2.4 Theme 4: The power shift from organisations to the hands of stakeholders

The power has shifted from retailers to consumers. Consumers now have the ability to shop wherever and whenever they want. Consumers are more sophisticated and more knowledgeable than ever before (sometimes more knowledgeable than a retailer's associates). With knowledge comes power, and consumers are much savvier in the way they determine where to spend their money. Brand identity is no longer as secure a source of advantage as it once was (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373). With that being said we see this power shift clearly in the results that came from the #DataMustFall movements. Shortly after the #DataMustFall movement gained momentum government felt much pressurised to comment and take action concerning the price of mobile data prices. Media articles reported that following the pressure from civilians government announced that a "Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services will conduct a two-day hearing concerning South Africa's mobile data costs". Additionally, the telecommunications regulatory body ICASA also shortly announced that they were going to investigate the price of data cost in South Africa. This is a clear indication that the power lies in the hands of consumers and not of organisations as it was in the past. One may argue that this is the reason the emerging paradigm of Strategic Communication argues that Communication practitioners are required to define and maintain an organisation's character and values, galvanise support thereof among stakeholders;, ensure the organisation's decision-

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making is guided by these values, build an organisational culture of listening and engagement and encourage responsible behaviour within organisations (Melbourne Mandate, 2012:1-3). Thus, strategic communication professionals assume the role of agents who represent the conscience of the organisation (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373; Holtzhausen, 2000:101, 105) and are required to draw attention to and shape values and inform and motivate the organisation's stakeholders to act on behalf of their specific issues.

6.2.5 Theme 5: The need to embrace new forms of doing business

From the media articles one thing is clear, the traditional ways of doing business for telecommunication companies has reached its expiry date. It is very apparent from all the regulatory bodies, government and various key stakeholders that supported the #DataMustFall movement that was initiated by consumers. In light of this, new forms of doing business becomes a priority for organisations to ensure sustainability. Porter and Kramer (2011) introduce the concept of "shared value" as a proposed business model for a sustainable business. They assert that shared value is a management strategy in which companies find business opportunities in social problems. It is important to note that shared value operates from the premise that ultimately the most powerful way in which any business can impact societal issues is through the business itself. This point also reappears in the introduction of the reflective paradigm that suggests that In reflection, the perspective rises from a mono-contextual first-order perspective to a poly-contextual second-order perspective. This is to say that instead of seeing the world mono-contextually, self-centred and from a perspective enclosed within the system, the social system observes its own and others' behaviour. Such observation is based on an understanding partly of itself as a specific, independent dynamic that is part of a larger poly-contextual, interdependent network, and partly of the socio-diversity's function in the processing of complexity of modern societies. Hence, reflection implies that the social system, on one hand, understands its specific identity as part of the socio-diversity, and retains and develops its independence; and, on the other hand, learns to understand its interdependence in the larger societal context and develops restrictions and coordinating mechanisms to other societal spheres.

6.3 QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

To collect a sample relevant to the case study and with minimal noise, the term "data must fall" and hashtag "#DataMustFall" were used to gather tweets from Twitter. It should be noted that the term and hashtag used are by no means the only ones representing the entire conversations about the #DataMustFall issue, however, the scale of the project required that the number of tweets be limited. The tweets' date/time stamp was also constrained to the 12 months; 01 September 2016 to 31 October 2018. This was a critical period of the crisis and represents the time when the issue first gained traction, as well as the time during which the activism peaked and the time immediately following the involvement of other key stakeholders.

There were approximately 20 000 tweets that were generated using twitter filter search. The hashtag #DataMustFall was searched over a twelve-month period; the sample tweets required further reduction to enable the manual coding process to be executed. A total of 100 tweets were selected over the twelve period and were in the English language, that became the coding pool of common themes and the most active users in the sample.

6.3.1Theme 1: Perception that mobile operators are extorting customers

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme “Perception that mobile operators are extorting customers” is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.

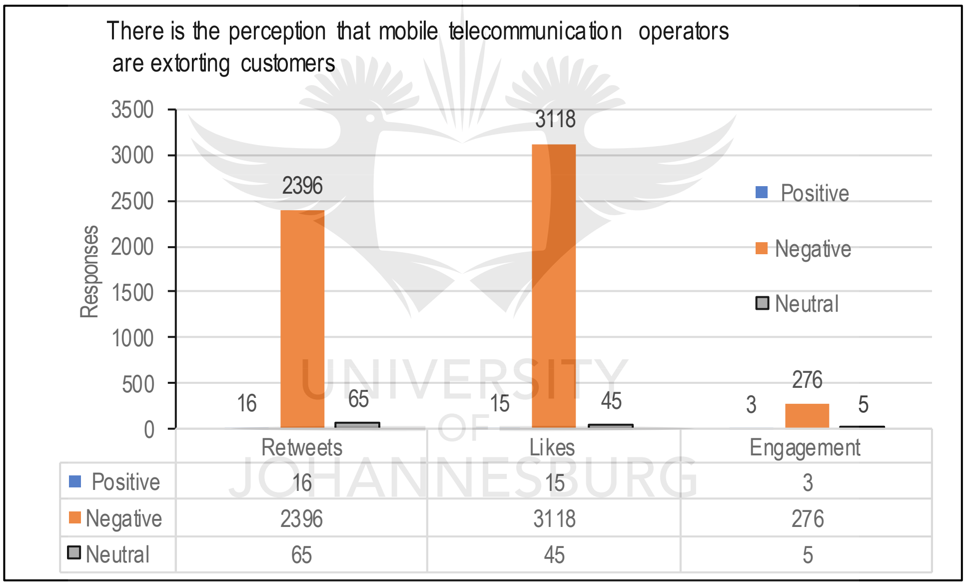

Figure 6.2 Theme 1: The perception that mobile telecommunication operators are extorting customers

As illustrated in Figure 6.2 above a total of 5939 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme “There is the perception that mobile telecommunications operators are extorting customers”. Within this category a total of 2477 were retweeted, 3178 were liked and a total of 284 engagements were recorded. All the tweets expressed that telecommunications particularly MTN is exploiting and “stealing” their data. For example a tweet by @JustBeeKayM stated “MTN is the worst. They even reserve your airtime for data without your permission😟😟 #datamustfall” this tweet had 392 retweets, 325 likes and 29 comments which all signalled an agreement with the tweet. In the literature it is discussed under the emerging paradigm of strategic communication that there is shift in Organisations from corporate social responsibility to accountability. This shift suggests that successful corporations in post-bureaucratic contexts need to develop a new social contract that sees them redefining the boundaries of their responsibility, and accepting accountability for the way they use resources and how they contribute to the environment (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013). The general sentiment from the tweets suggests that MTN and other mobile telecommunication operators are “exploiting” “stealing” and “extorting” their mobile data. This sentiment is contrary to the shift of “accountability” that is strongly suggested by the emerging paradigm of strategic communication.

Figure 6.2 also illustrates of the 5939 tweets that were analysed, 34 were classified as positive in their tonality, 5790 were classified as negative and 115 were neutral meaning they were neither positive nor negative or in some instances there was some element of sarcasm in the tweets. It is important that note that this theme has the highest number negative tweets, which is alarming for MTN because as the literature suggests today’s corporate/stakeholder activists aren’t limiting themselves to cautiously phrased “corporate statements” on safe, noncontroversial topics. In fact, they are speaking out on prominent issues of the day and taking stands for what they believe in (and that they believe many of their business’ customers agree with) (Mintz, 2016). This new kind of social movement that is arising due to changing ideologies and expectations from society and organisations in poly-contextual realities emerges as a result of the disintegration of societies. Furthermore, the stakeholder concept originally articulated by Freeman (1984), has expanded over the years to include multiple stakeholders that do not have a direct stake in the organisation, but are viewed as active ‘influencers’ who can affect or are affected by the actions of the organisation (Coombs 2000, 75; Parmar, Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Purnell & De Colle, 2010). This would also entail society’s expectation that organisations are good citizens who can be held accountable for providing greater support and ‘corporate social responsiveness’ to the societies they are part of (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2008).

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6.3.2 Theme 2: Access to the internet being likened to human rights

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme “Access to the internet being likened to human rights” is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.

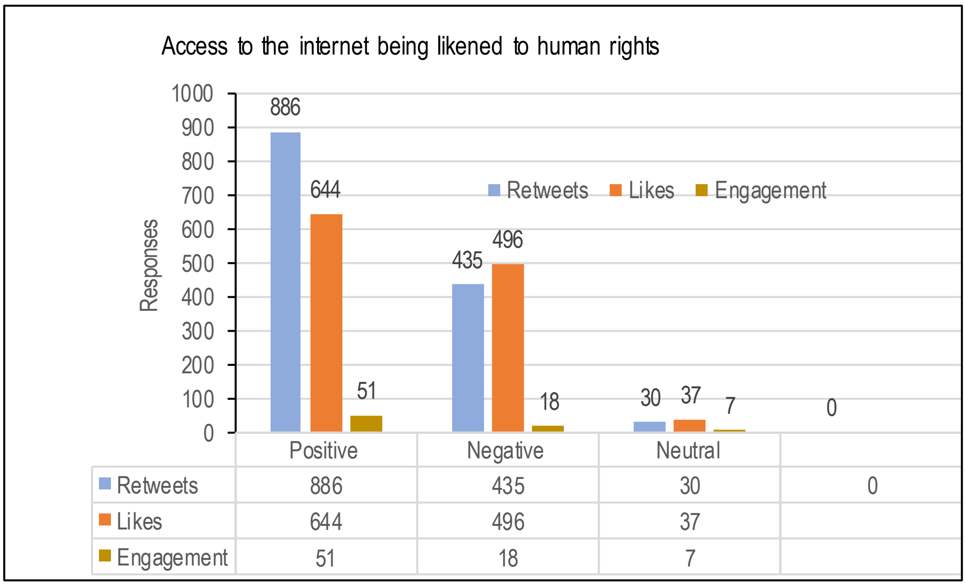


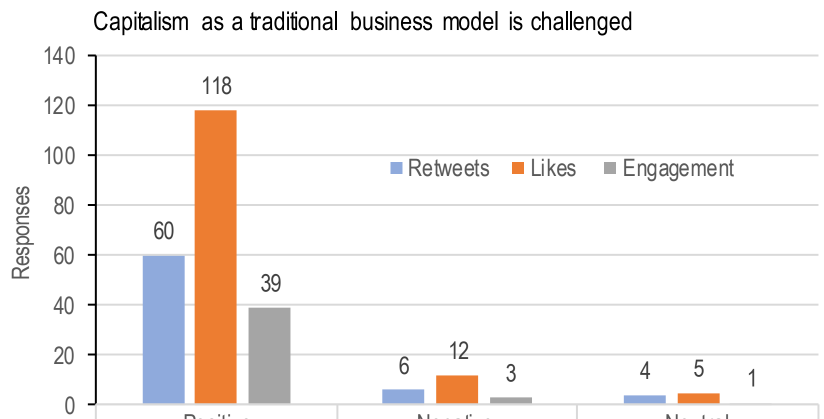
Figure 6.3 Access to the Internet being likened to human rights

As illustrated in Figure 6.3 above a total of 2604 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme “Access to the internet being likened to human rights”. Within this category a total of 1351 were retweeted, 1177 were liked and a total of 76 engagements were recorded. In the literature it is highlighted in a study by Ernst & Young and Boston College Centre for Corporate Citizenship (2016) indicates that the role of business in society continues to be an ongoing debate in public discourse due to issues such as human rights, pollution and climate change, and therefore prompts a greater need for sustainability, transparency and responsibility in business. The issue of access to the internet is being seen as a basic “human right” by these activists and MTN is seen as a hindrance to that basic human right. As an example a tweet by @_MediaMattersZa states that “High data costs contribute towards inequality and the digital divide between the haves and the haves not. #datamustfall @mybroadband”, the tweet had 11 retweets and 5 likes.

Of the total 2604 tweets that were analysed, 1581 tweets were classified as Positive, 949 were negative and 74 were neutral. It is important to note that there is a higher number of tweets classified as “Positive” because of the tonality of the tweet. Most tweets were made the assumption that access to the internet is a basic human right, and this coincides with the literature in that it was in 2016, the United Nations Human Rights Council released a non-binding resolution condemning intentional disruption of internet access by governments. The resolution reaffirmed that "the same rights people have offline must also be protected online (**UN** Resolution, 2016).

6.3.3 Theme 3: Challenging capitalism as a traditional business model

The section below is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme “Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged” is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.



	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	60	6	4
Likes	118	12	5
Engagement	39	3	1

Figure 6.4 Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged

As illustrated Figure 6.4 above a total of 248 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged". Within this category a total of 70 were retweeted, 135 were liked and a total of 43 engagements were recorded. In addition the figure above also illustrates that of the 248 tweets that were analysed, 217 were classified as Positive, 21 as Negative and 10 as Neutral. It is important to note that most tweets are classified as positive due to their tonality in that they suggested that telecommunication operators in this case MTN need to re-evaluate their "prices" and their "data expiry" policy that they implemented. As an example @Arrndy tweeted "It annoys me when we say #DataMustFall or #FeesMustFall & people start being economy analysts by saying its impossible bla bla, like wazini? It is possible" the tweet was retweeted 17 times, liked 12 times and had 2 comments that seemed to agree with the sentiment that telecommunication organisations need to start doing business ethically and stop being capitalistic in approach. This sentiment corroborates the literature, as Porter and Kramer (2016) argue that "capitalist system is under siege. In recent years business increasingly has been viewed as a major cause of social, environmental, and economic problems. Companies are widely perceived to be prospering at the expense of the broader community". They argue that the legitimacy of business has never been lower than it is today and in order to save capitalism, capitalism needs to be reinvented. They also propose Shared Value as a business model that can be implemented. According to Porter and Kramer (2011), shared value may be created by three main strategies at the business level (referred to as "CSV strategies") by reconceiving products and markets, by redefining productivity in the value chain and by enabling local cluster development. Large international companies are best positioned to reap the rewards of these strategies. It is said that corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes focus on issues related to a business' reputation with limited relevance to any causal description of business behaviour (Peloza, 2006; Van Oosterhout & Heugens, 2008).

6.3.4 Theme 4: An expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme “An expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people” is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.

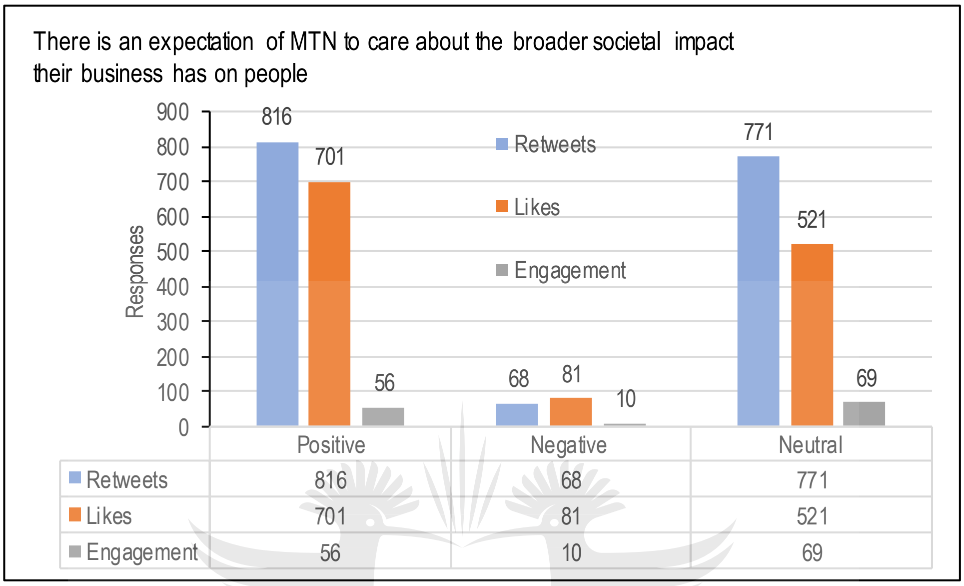


Figure 6.5 An expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people

As illustrated in Figure 6.5 above a total of 3093 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme “There is an expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people”. Within this category a total of 1655 were retweeted, 1303 were liked and a total of 135 engagements were recorded. Of the 3093 tweets that were analysed, 1573 were classified as positive, 159 as negative and 1361 as neutral. There are a lot of “Positive” tweets because the tonality and sentiment of the tweets suggested that telecommunication organisations need to not only make profit but also care about the broader societal impact their business has on people. For example @kagio_11 tweeted “I fully, without reservation support #DataMustFall campaign @iamtbotouch”, this single tweet was retweeted 249 times and liked 253 times and has 12 comments. The sentiment from the tweets supports the claims made by the Reflective paradigm function that suggests that self-presentation is a key function of the reflective paradigm. The third function, according to Holmström (2007), refers to self-presentation. Self-presentation asserts that in order to facilitate the environment's observation of the organisation, the reflective organisation sees that what different observers consider to be the same thing and generates quite different information for each of these positions (Holmström, 2007). In self-presentation, the organisation must present itself as transparent and sensitive to a dynamic, ambiguous environment plagued with dissent (Holmström et al., 2010:9). Instead of producing more information, the reflective organisation openly acknowledges its responsibility as decision taker and commits itself in relation to society. Holmström (2006) notes that reflexivity is characterised by blind self-presentation from within so 'objective' information and transparency produce dissent rather than consent.

6.3.5 Theme 5: There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing"

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme "There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing" is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.

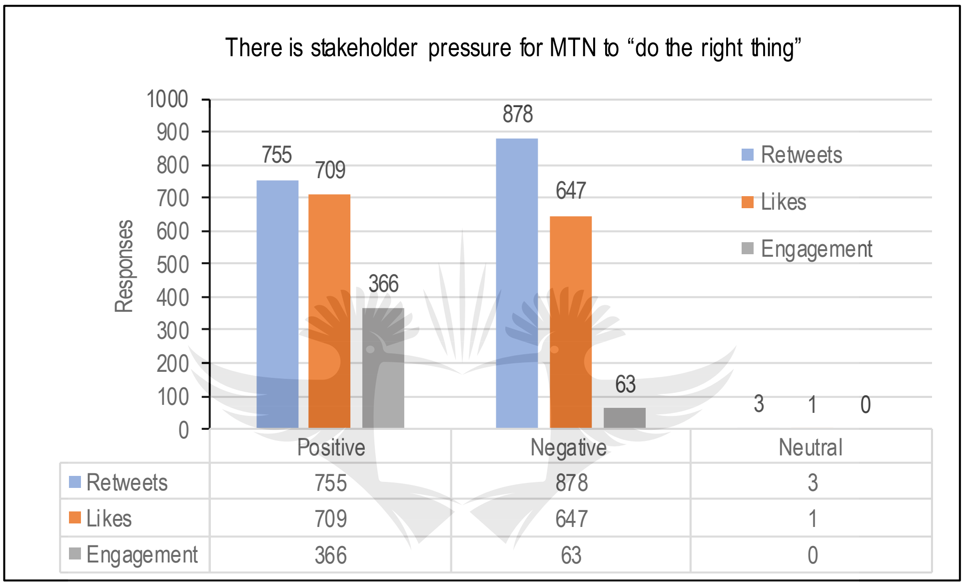


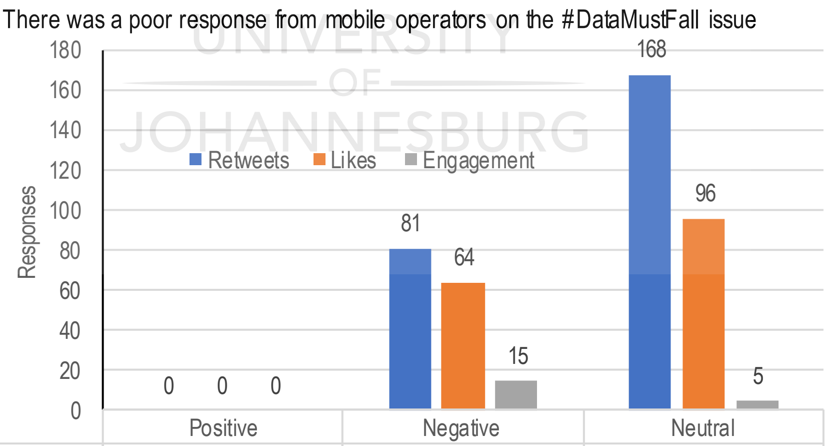
Figure 6.6 Stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing"

As illustrated in Figure 6.6 above a total of 3422 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing". Within this category a total of 1636 were retweeted, 1357 were liked and a total of 429 engagements were recorded. Of the 3422 tweets that were analysed, 1830 were classified as Positive, 1588 as Negative and 4 as Neutral. There is a higher number tweets classified as Positive because most tweets here seemed to agree that telecommunication companies need to do the right things which in this instance is to decrease the price of mobile data. The tweet can be seen with the following example by @Kary_Burn who tweeted "@ RealBlackCoffee #DataFalling @MTNza has joined the low data movement. 1 data Bundle is now R65 & 5 Gig is R139 on night express...!!!!!! #datamustfall". The tweet was retweeted 163 times, and liked 188 times and commented on 33 times.

According to Holmström (2005:6), the reflective paradigm refers to the counter-concepts that represent the different ways an organisation (or another social system) observes itself and the world that seem to be a key to understanding corporate social responsibility. The theme "There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing " developed from the set of tweets analysed suggests that that other prominent stakeholders such as the telecommunication regulatory body ICASA, Governemt officials such Panyza Lesufi and Opposition political parties such the EFF were also in agreement with the activism from the #DataMustFall anti brand groups. This is seems to highlight what was stated in the literature that organisations need to focus more on issue-focused stakeholder management. Issues-focused stakeholder management explains how an organisation acts in the same capacity as other stakeholders to address an issue of shared concern through a "shared course of action communication" (Roloff, 2008: 245-247). Roloff (2008:235) argues that Stakeholder theory is limited in that it places emphasis on the organisation as the focal point – in that stakeholders are identified either through their relationship with the organisation or through "claiming a stake" in the organisation. This refers to organisation-focused stakeholder management, which aims to protect the organisation using relationship management to interact strategically with all stakeholders and to ensure these interactions assist the organisation to achieve its goals (Roloff, 2008:245). Attaining moral legitimacy through assessing various stakeholder expectations and attempting to satisfy these to some extent is the aim of issues-focused stakeholder management (Roloff, 2007:246).

6.3.6 Theme 6: There was a poor response from mobile operators on the #DataMustFall issue

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme "There was a poor response from mobile operators on the #DataMustFall issue" is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.



	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	0	81	168
Likes	0	64	96
Engagement	0	15	5

Figure 6.7 A poor response from mobile operators on the #DataMustFall issue

As illustrated in Figure 6.7 above a total of 429 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "There was a poor response from mobile operators on the #DataMustFall issue". Within this category a total of 249 were retweeted, 160 were liked and a total of 20 engagements were recorded. Of the 429 tweets that were analysed, 0 were positive, 160 Negative and 296 Neutral.

The overall sentiment from the tweets seems to suggest that the telecommunication operators responded poorly to the #DataMustFall demands. As an example a tweet by @ stated that "#DataMustFall refuses to vanish, it's a serious issue and I dare say operators silence is rude, they have to change the status quo". The tweet was retweeted 47 times and liked 42 times and had 5 comments. In literature under the discussion under the emerging paradigm of strategic communication the shift from monologue to dialogue is highlighted as a key characteristic for organisations. The shift from monologue to dialogue as identified by Du Plessis (2006), Hallahan et al. (2007), and Ströh (2007), is where the traditional approach of one voice has shifted to the emergent approach of many diverse voices. This openness to diverse viewpoints and freedom of speech encourages creative and divergent approaches to problem solving. Lastly, the shift from consensus to conflict/dissent, which asserts that stakeholders have a multiplicity of voices and propositions to advance the organisation for the benefit of all stakeholders directly or indirectly (Janssens & Zanoni 2005). Therefore, within the strategic paradigm, the role of management is no longer control, but to steer the organisation through complexity and consensus, which forms meaning and understanding. In this instances organisations are expected to engage in dialogue with its stakeholders and it was a clear indication that this characteristic was not practised by telecommunication companies in the #DataMustFall controversy.

6.3.7 Theme 7: There is a perception that access to internet is closely linked to economic prosperity

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme "There is a perception that access to internet is closely linked to economic prosperity" is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.

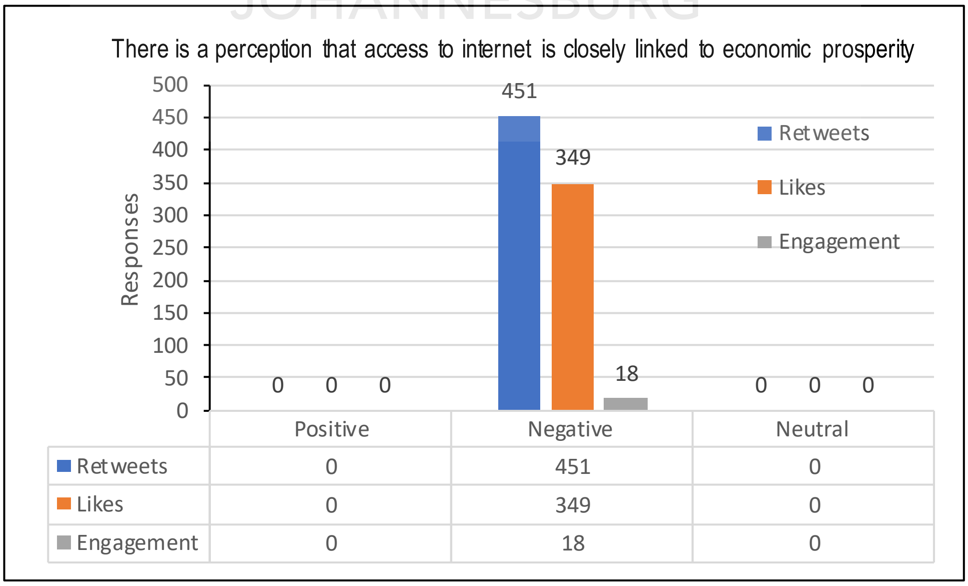


Figure 6.8 the perception that access to internet is closely linked to economic prosperity

As illustrated in Figure 6.8 above a total of 818 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme “There is a perception that access to internet is closely linked to economic prosperity”. Within this category a total of 451 were retweeted, 349 were liked and a total of 18 engagements were recorded. Of the 818 tweets that were analysed, O were Positive, 818 were Negative and 0 were Neutral. The overall sentiment suggested that access to internet leads to economic prosperity. An example of the tweet can be seen “@Kay_OhYeah Its Lunch time ...Now I must decide whether to buy food or data?? 😟😪 #datamustfall”. The tweet was retweeted 101 times, liked 34 times and had 4 comments. In the literature Kelly (2018) argues that there are four factors that characterise a social issue or problem. These include; the public must recognise the situation as a problem, the situation is against the general values accepted by the society, a large segment of the population recognises the problem as a valid concern and the problem can be rectified or alleviated through the joint action of citizens and/or community resources. In the case of South Africa, when it comes to the cost of data; Matthews (2018) notes that among adult South Africans earning more than R30 000 a month, internet penetration is at 82.4%. Mathews (2018: 78) further notes that “cell phone penetration declines rapidly as income declines, falling to 61.3% for those earning between R14 000 and R18 000 a month, 42% for those earning between R3 000 and R6 000 a month, and below 30% for those earning below R2 500 a month, according to a World Wide Worx and Dark Fibre Africa study”. The affordability of mobile data is definitely a social issue when analysed using Kelly’s (2018) criteria of what constitutes a social issue. With that being said it is also important to note that for organisations to become sustainable as strongly articulated in the literature the three focal areas of sustainable development which are the environment, social and economic interests of broader society need to be the focus as opposed to the welfare of particular organisations (The Global Reporting Index, 2016:31). According to Klauer (1999:119), sustainability involves future consequences being integrated into current decision-making with all actions assessed by asking how fair action towards the future inhabitants of the world as well as fairness towards the planet can be achieved today. The Global Reporting Index (2016:31) concurs that sustainable development or sustainability is development to meet the needs of the present without compromising the fulfilment of future generations’ needs.

6.3.8 Theme 8: Social mobilisation and boycotting mobile operators as an action to prevent

The below section is the quantitative analysis of the tweets and parallels are drawn from the qualitative analysis of the tweets as indicated in the thematic analysis above. The theme “Social mobilisation and boycotting mobile operators as an action to prevent” is derived from coding and analysing the tweets.

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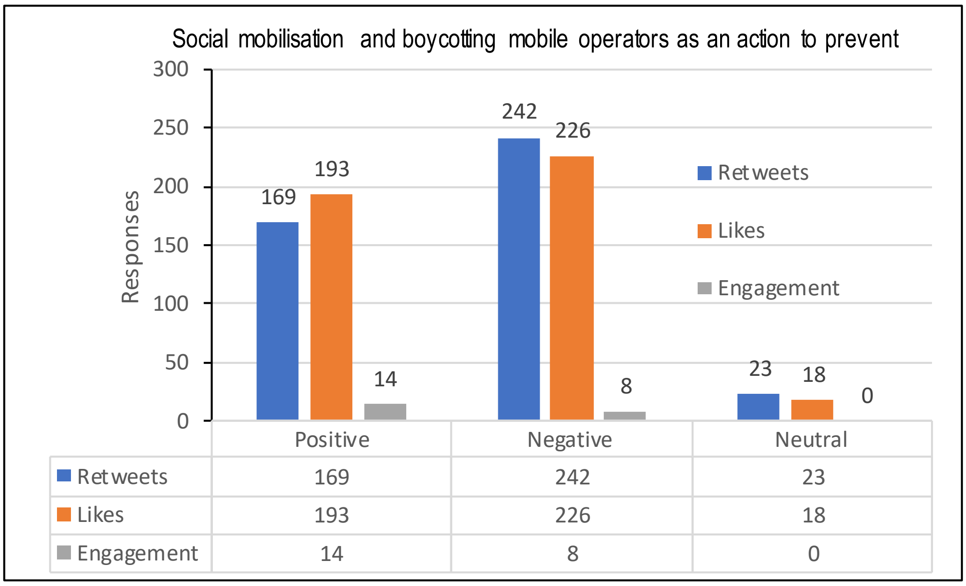

Figure 6.9 Social mobilisation and boycotting mobile operators as an action to prevent

As illustrated in Figure 6.9 above a total of 893 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "Social mobilisation and boycotting mobile operators as an action to prevent". Within this category a total of 434 were retweeted, 437 were liked and a total of 22 engagements were recorded. Of the 893 tweets that were analysed, 376 were classified as Positive, 476 as Negative and 41 as Neutral. As an example @AndImLee tweeted "We will Protest until Something Happens!! Good Morning Everyone!! #DataMustFall". The tweet was retweeted 65 times, liked 67 times and had 4 comments. In the literature it is stated that increasingly social and environmental activists are becoming more involved in the corporate governance debate. Many activists have joined forces with shareholder lobby groups to campaign against anti-takeover legislation, CEO-dominated boards and lenient auditors, issues that used to be well beyond the traditional social activism programme (Cespa & Cestone, 2002). Stakeholder activists are increasingly playing an important role as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that are keeping organisations accountable. Activist groups and individual citizens can "hold a corporate logo hostage in the media until shareholders or corporate managers regard the bad publicity as an independent threat to a carefully cultivated brand image" (Bennett, 2003, p. 152; O'Callaghan, 2007). Furthermore, Mintz (2016) states that today's corporate/stakeholder activists aren't limiting themselves to cautiously phrased "corporate statements" on safe, noncontroversial topics; they're speaking out on prominent issues of the day and taking stands for what they believe in (and that they believe many of their business' customers agree with). This new kind of social movement that is arising due to changing ideologies and expectations from society and organisations in poly-contextual realities emerges as a result of the disintegration of societies.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives conclusions and recommendations for the study conducted. The research study started off by determine the research problem. As a premise it is important to note that the study initially set out to with the following problem statement: “Exploring stakeholder perceptions relating to MTN’s online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy”. The study focuses on the #DataMustFall movement and aims to establish perceptions relating to MTN’s online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy. The next step was to conduct a literature review with the purpose of providing the foundation of knowledge on topic, identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication and give credit to other researchers and identify inconstancies or gaps in research, conflicts in previous studies, open questions left from other research. This was done in the aim of placing the research under question within the context of existing literature making a case for why further study is needed.

A case study methodological orientation was adopted as the base of this study and MTN Group was chosen as sample and population due to the fact that it was declared one of the largest telecommunication organisation in Africa. Because this research takes the course of documentation study, the use of multiple data collection techniques and sources strengthens the credibility of outcomes and enables different interpretations and meanings to be included in data analysis. This is known as triangulation (Flick, 2014). The Documents and commentary from various sources such as ICASA, MTN Group, Right2Know campaign, media articles and social media commentary will be collated and analysed. Additionally, tweets following the #DataMusFall hashtag were collated over a 12 month period (1st September 2016 – 1st October 2017). The findings gathered from data collected are analysed using both qualitative and quantitative content analysis. Themes were grouped into their relevant categories and arranged according to the highest frequency in a descending order down to the lowest frequency. Reference is made to the various concepts related to social responsibility such as the strategic communication and CSV context of organisations, reflective paradigm, and stakeholder activism with regards to the #DataMustFall movement. This was done by benchmarking the findings gathered against the literature review, and alternative explanations for the data gathered are also discussed where relevant. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings and their usefulness in answering each research sub-question. The answers discussed in relation to each research sub-question are then collectively referred to in order to answer the research problem. Subsequently, the methodological limitations of this study, recommendations for future research as well as recommendations for future of #DataMustFall issue are discussed. The research aims are confirmed with the findings of the study below in order to show whether the research objectives were achieved.

7.2 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO RESEARCH AIM ONE

The first research objective for the study was to establish stakeholder reactions to MTN's online responses to stakeholder activism in the #DataMustFall controversy.

The literature review showed that there is an evolution that has occurred largely due to interactive technologies that have allowed stakeholders to interact with organisations. The literature states that increasingly, organisations aim to nurture stakeholder relationships that are lifelong, built not just on product features but also on shared cultural values. In addition, digital activism made possible by the development of interactive technologies has transformed political protests in the last two decades. Smartphones and access to the internet have changed the way political events, protests and movements are organised, helping to mobilise thousands of new supporters of a diverse range of causes (Karatzogianni, 2016). These new technologies often bypass the existing world of politics, social movements and campaigning. Instead, these new technologies provide an alternative way of organising society and the economy. As a result, this has translated into a collision where consumers, buying into brand values and the heightened ethical awareness driven by an increasingly "woke" consumers (consumers that are aware of issues concerning social justice and racial justice), are voting (purchasing) with their money more than ever before. Brand activism is gaining traction and has the power to shape our economies and culture (Lirtsman, 2017). A recent Forbes study found that 75% of millennials said it's important that the brands they buy from give back to society, the new breed of tech-savvy and social media-driven consumers isn't afraid to hold brands accountable online and in public spheres.

From the thematic analysis done on the documentation and online articles the linkages are seen in the fourth theme titled "The power shift from organisations to the hands of stakeholders". Insights from the thematic analysis indicate that shortly after the #DataMustFall movement gained momentum government felt much pressurised to comment and take action concerning the price of mobile data prices. Media articles reported that following the pressure from civilians government announced that a "Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services will conduct a two-day hearing concerning South Africa's mobile data costs". Additionally, the telecommunications regulatory body ICASA also shortly announced that they were going to investigate the price of data cost in South Africa. This is a clear indication that the power lies in the hands of consumers and not of organisations as it was in the past. Additionally, the sentiment from the thematic analysis also indicates that there was a strong agreement from a number of stakeholders including the telecommunications regulatory body ICASA, journalists/analysts and academics with the claims made by the #DataMustFall activists.

Furthermore, in the quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the tweets, the fifth theme titled "There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing" also solidifies the literature and the thematic analysis. In Figure 7.2.5 it is indicated that a total of 3422 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing". Within this category a total of 1636 were retweeted, 1357 were liked and a total of 429 engagements were recorded. Of the 3422 tweets that were analysed, 1830 were classified as Positive, 1588 as Negative and 4 as Neutral. There is a higher number tweets classified as Positive because most tweets here seemed to agree that telecommunication companies need to do the right things which in this instance is to decrease the price of mobile data.

7.3 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO RESEARCH AIM TWO

The second research objective for the study was to establish how MTN Group adopts the principles of the reflective paradigm.

In the literature the Reflective Paradigm is identified as the meta-theoretical paradigm of the study. Meta-theory is a critical exploration of the theoretical frameworks or lenses that have provided direction to research and to researchers, as well as the theory that has arisen from research in a particular field of study. Meta-theoretical investigations are generally part of the philosophy of science. According to Holmström (2005: 6), the reflective paradigm refers to the counter-concepts that represent the different ways an organisation (or another social system) observes itself and the world that seem to be a key to understanding corporate social responsibility. Holmström, Falkheimer and Nielsen (2010) also note that because of the reflective paradigm the organisation self-examines itself in the larger societal system, and sees the interdependence within the socio-diversity of that system (society). Therefore, reflection is the production of profound self-understanding in relation to the environment in which the organisation exists. This means, on the one hand, the organisation clarifies and strengthens its specific independent identity and, on the other, it develops restrictions and coordinating tools in its decision-making processes in recognition of societal interdependence (Holmström: 2002). To achieve the reflective paradigm Holmström (2003) notes that there are three main functions that make up the reflective paradigm: sensitivity, self-identity and self-presentation.

In the thematic analysis a theme titled "Stakeholders expect organisations to become more socially responsible" closely links to how the reflective paradigm was prevalent in the study. Throughout the literature in this study it has been clear that stakeholders from consumers, government, regulators and media expect more from organisations. In the literature the concept of the virtuous organisation is strongly highlighted. The virtuous organisation perspective addresses sustainability and the need for organisations to be socially responsible because of the

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extensive influence they have on society (Willenius, 2005:138-142). A key argument is that they should focus on ethics in demonstrating concern for the future and the well-being of humanity (Fuller & Tilley, 2005:184; 195-196). In the media reports that were collected it is very apparent judging from the "Picketing" that took place outside key telecommunication companies head offices that if an organization is not virtuous or seen to be it will be forced to be. It is reported that the "Right2Know led pickets outside the four major telecommunications companies in Gauteng". Furthermore, Mmamoloko Kubayi, the chairperson of the portfolio committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services was quoted as having said the telecommunications operators have a month to 'get their act together'. Suggesting that the organisations are not acting and behaving as their stakeholders expect them to be. In addition this sentiment expressed above also indicates that MTN and other mobile telecommunication organisations were not reflecting their broader societal environment as suggested by the reflective paradigm.

In the qualitative and quantitative content analysis the theme "An expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people" can closely be linked to the reflection in the production of profound self-understanding in relation to the environment in which the organisation exists. As illustrated in Figure 7.2.4 above a total of 3093 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "There is an expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people". Within this category a total of 1655 were retweeted, 1303 were liked and a total of 135 engagements were recorded. Of the 3093 tweets that were analysed, 1573 were classified as positive, 159 as negative and 1361 as neutral. There are a lot of "Positive" tweets because the tonality and sentiment of the tweets suggested that telecommunication organisations need to not only make profit but also care about the broader societal impact their business has on people, this is also a claim made by the reflective paradigm.

Furthermore, the theme "Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged" also reinforces the same sentiment. As illustrated Figure 7.2.3 above a total of 248 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged". Within this category a total of 70 were retweeted, 135 were liked and a total of 43 engagements were recorded. In addition the figure above also illustrates that of the 248 tweets that were analysed, 217 were classified as Positive, 21 as Negative and 10 as Neutral. It is important to note that most tweets are classified as positive due to their tonality in that they suggested that telecommunication operators in this case MTN need to re-evaluate their "prices" and their "data expiry" policy that they implemented. In other words, this claim is to say MTN was not being "sensitive" to its environment. According to Holmström (2007), sensitivity deals with how an organisation sees its environment. The modernist version of the reflexive paradigm sees only its 'native' environment and the perspective is self-centred from within. In reflection, the organisation sees itself from the outside and sees a larger and more complex environment as relevant.

7.4 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVE THREE

The third research objective was to establish how MTN Group responds to stakeholder activism.

In literature the emerging paradigm of strategic communication is discussed as the most suitable theoretical perspective from which to explore the pressure on organisations to address social issues as it draws attention to the role of communication professionals as organisational agents who represent the conscience of the organisation (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373; Holtzhausen, 2000:101-105). Overton-de Klerk and Verwey (2013: 370) explained that, "strategic communication is about how an organisation functions to advance its mission by intentional, persuasive means of communication, not only via marketing, corporate and other institutionalised forms of public communication but via all of the organisation's communication ". Therefore, strategic communication is the use of various communication methods by an organisation to achieve its organisational goals. Strategic communication focuses on the organisation in terms of how it presents itself as well as how it promotes itself through the intentional activities of its employees, leaders and communication practitioners (Hallahan et al, 2007).

In the quantitative content analysis as illustrated in Figure 7.2.6 above a total of 429 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "There was a poor response from mobile operators on the #DataMustFall issue". Within this category a total of 249 were retweeted, 160 were liked and a total of 20 engagements were recorded. Of the 429 tweets that were analysed, zero were positive, 160 Negative and 296 Neutral. The overall sentiment from the tweets seems to suggest that the telecommunication operators responded poorly to the #DataMustFall demands. As an example a tweet by @kgosi stated that "#DataMustFall refuses to vanish, it's a serious issue and I dare say operators silence is rude, they have to change the status quo". The tweet was retweeted 47 times and liked 42 times and had 5 comments. In literature under the discussion under the emerging paradigm of strategic communication the shift from monologue to dialogue is highlighted as a key characteristic for organisations. The emerging paradigm of strategic communication highlights a few shifts in how organisations should conduct themselves one being the shift from monologue to dialogue as identified by Du Plessis (2006), Hallahan et al. (2007), and Ströh (2007), is where the traditional approach of one voice has shifted to the emergent approach of many diverse voices. This openness to diverse viewpoints and freedom of speech encourages creative and divergent approaches to problem solving. The general sentiment seems to be that MTN did not implement the principles purported by Strategic Communication, and one may argue that if these principles were used it perhaps MTN's reputation during the #DataMustFall could be been better salvaged.

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7.5 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVE FOUR

The fourth research objective was to ascertain how MTN Group practices corporate social responsibility and shared value.

The literature states that non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), governments and philanthropy have traditionally been mobilised to address social problems; however, in recent years organisations have been expected to also champion social issues. One way in which organisations have traditionally addressed sustainability issues is through corporate social responsibility practices. The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a theoretical framework for enterprises, according to the shared assumption that the economy has to consider some social and ethical aspects in their businesses, especially the value of the environment and the expectations of stakeholders. In this approach, it is possible to link CSR with other research fields, such as the "well-being economy", the theory of information and overcoming "utilitarianism" in the economy (Ceccacci & Lucentini, 2003). Porter and Kramer (2011) introduce the concept of "shared value" as a proposed business model for a sustainable business. They assert that shared value is a management strategy in which companies find business opportunities in social problems. It is important to note that shared value operates from the premise that ultimately the most powerful way in which any business can impact societal issues is through the business itself (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

In the thematic analysis the theme "The need to embrace new forms of doing business". From the media articles one thing is clear, the traditional ways of doing business for telecommunication companies has reached its expiry date. It is very apparent from all the regulatory bodies, government and various key stakeholders that supported the #DataMustFall movement that was initiated by consumers. In light of this new forms of doing business becomes a priority for organisations to ensure sustainability. Which is also highlighted by Porter and Kramer (2011) who assert that it is important to note that shared value operates from the premise that ultimately the most powerful way in which any business can impact societal issues is through the business itself.

In the quantitative content analysis of the tweets analysed a theme titled "Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged" was derived from the analysis. The theme is illustrated in Figure 7.2.3 above and it is shown that a total of 248 tweets were analysed and classified under the theme "Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged". Within this category a total of 70 were retweeted, 135 were liked and a total of 43 engagements were recorded. In addition the figure above also illustrates that of the 248 tweets that were analysed, 217 were classified as Positive, 21 as Negative and 10 as Neutral. It is important to note that most tweets are classified as positive due to their tonality in that they suggested that telecommunication operators in this case MTN need to re-evaluate their "prices" and their "data expiry" policy that they implemented.

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7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In light of the methodological limitations of this study discussed above, the following recommendations should be considered if researchers wish to replicate this study or build on the existing body of knowledge through further research:

The future study should include various telecommunication organisations to ensure equal representation of other major telecommunication companies. This would allow for a holistic overview of responses in which biases resulting from dominance of the telecommunication organisation and the popularity.

In future the study should also hear from telecommunication organisations to determine whether the #DataMustFall movement has had any impact on their internal organisation strategy when it comes to the cost of mobile data costs.

7.7 RECOMMENDATION FOR INDUSTRY

This study discovered significant findings in which strategic communication practitioners can utilise in the era of consumer activism.

It is important to note that static formulaic business approaches will not sustain organisations forward and the level of uncertainty that comes with the digital economy requires continuous learning and self-observation as suggested by the reflective paradigm. Therefore, the Communication practitioners are urged to adopt principles suggested by the emerging paradigm strategic communication. This can be done using a variety of strategies such as continuous professional development, education and training in order for strategic communication practitioners to keep up with emerging industry trends and practices. Continuous professional development education and training ensures that further learning is advanced in a practical, structured and relevant way to ensure that there are applied competences in learning. This study recommends that strategic communication between professional bodies such as the Marketing Association of South Africa address evolving pertinent strategies that are being practiced in corporate social responsibility.

Organisations will continue to get pressure from a variety of stakeholders and activists groups, it is very important for the industry of Strategic Communication to start being reflective of their environment and craft new forms of doing business.

And lastly, organisations should reconsider the traditional business principle of “profit first” that is rooted in capitalism, but rather have a holistic view of the impact their business has on the broader

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society and allow corporate social responsibility to take centre stage as argued by the shared value business model.

7.8 LIMITATIONS

As one of its favourable disadvantages discussed in CHAPTER 3, qualitative research cannot be generalised or applied to an entire population due to its use of small sample sizes (Babbie, 2007:22). Although the research results can be transferred to social media base brand communities in contemporary South Africa due to the rapidly changing post-digital landscape, the results cannot be generalised to explain the co-creation of digital brand innovation on all platforms with social media based brand communities such as Instagram and YouTube.

The application of trustworthiness in the context of this research will be applied by understanding the research and its findings in the context of strategic communication as a discipline. Furthermore, when documents are studied, it is important that the researcher evaluates their authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. The researcher should establish the authenticity of a document, namely ensuring that it was produced by the author or body ascribed to it (Jupp, 2006: 80).

For a qualitative research community, a case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and pays close attention to the influence of its social, political and other contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2010). It is also important to note that optimising understanding of the case requires paying meticulous attention to its activities. It is therefore the aim of this paper to give a case study analysis into the #DataMustFall movement and how it has affected MTN.

It is important to note that although #DataMustFall movement had a strong campaign against mobile telecommunication operators the price of mobile data is still very high as compared to other countries and more mobilisation and campaigning needs to happen to ensure that more people are digitally included to an increasing digital centred world.

7.9 CONCLUSION

To draw conclusion of the study, it is important to refer back to the research question and sub-questions which set the premise of this study, and determine how they were answered.

Research Question:

What are stakeholders' perceptions pertaining to MTN's online responses in the #DataMustFall" controversy?"

Research sub-questions:

4 What are stakeholder perceptions of MTN's online narratives relating to stakeholder activism as a response strategy in the #DataMustFall controversy on Facebook and Twitter?

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5 What are stakeholder perceptions of MTN's responses to activists' communication on social media platforms such as Twitter?

6 What principles are MTN using to guide its online narratives relating to stakeholder activism as a response strategy in the #DataMustFall controversy?

Stakeholders found that MTN had a poor response to their online narratives, with themes such as "MTN did not respond" which suggest a blatant ignorance from mobile telecommunication organisations during the #DataMusFall movement.

Increasingly stakeholder activism occurs on online platforms such as twitter, it is important for organisations to have an online reputation strategy to deal with online activism. This can only be achieved by having regular social monitoring and have active feedback loops on social media platforms.

The research focus of this study is guided by three key factors: the reflective paradigm as a meta-theoretical statement, the emerging paradigm of strategic communication and stakeholder activism.

Reflective paradigm: According to Holmström (2005: 6), the reflective paradigm as we have come to know it alludes to counter-concepts that represent different ways of how an organisation (or another social system) observes itself and the world, which seem to be a key to understanding social responsibility as basically a specific worldview.

Strategic communication: The emerging paradigm of strategic communication is discussed as the most suitable theoretical perspective from which to explore the pressure on organisations to address social issues as it draws attention to the role of communication professionals as organisational agents who represent the conscience of the organisation (Overton-de Klerk & Verwey, 2013:373; Holtzhausen, 2000:101-105).

Stakeholder activism: According to Hollenbeck and Zinkhan (2006) stakeholder activists demonstrations an emerging new form of consumer activism. Their activist strategies have received more recognition in recent years as consumer rebellion is viewed as a worldwide social movement (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006: 479). They emphasise a consumer's right to be protected against adulterated, deficient, or unsafe products and services.

From the data gathered and analysed, it becomes very apparent that perceptions from stakeholders are that MTN is perceived to be "extorting" and "over pricing" the cost of mobile data as strongly indicated in the thematic analysis and the quantitative content analysis. It is also important to note that stakeholders persive MTN to be a stumbling block in their participation into the economy and often draw parallels that MTN is contributing to the high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality in the country due to the high cost of mobile data. The perceptions also correlate with assumptions made from the literature in that organisations need to reflect their broader environment in which they operate, to ensure organisational sustainability. This can be done through various eefforts as the literature suggests such as adoting the reflective paradigm and implementing strategic communication principles. Consumer activists are very powerful and movements they form such as #DataMustFall have the potential to negatively impact the reputation and revenue of the organisations. Making it very important to understand how stakeholders are ever evolving and how best to strategically work with them.

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APPENDICES A: Code book of #DataMustFall tweets for the period 1st September 2016 to 31st October 2017

Content Analysis

Hypothesis of themes:

Themes	Colour code of theme
1. There is the perception that mobile telecommunication operators are extorting customers	
2. Access to the internet being likened to human rights	
3. Capitalism as a traditional business model is challenged	
4. There is an expectation of MTN to care about the broader societal impact their business has on people	
5. There is stakeholder pressure for MTN to "do the right thing"	
6. There was a poor response from mobile operators on the #DataMustFall issue	
7. There is a perception that access to internet is closely linked to economic prosperity	
8. Social mobilisation and boycotting mobile operators as an action to prevent	

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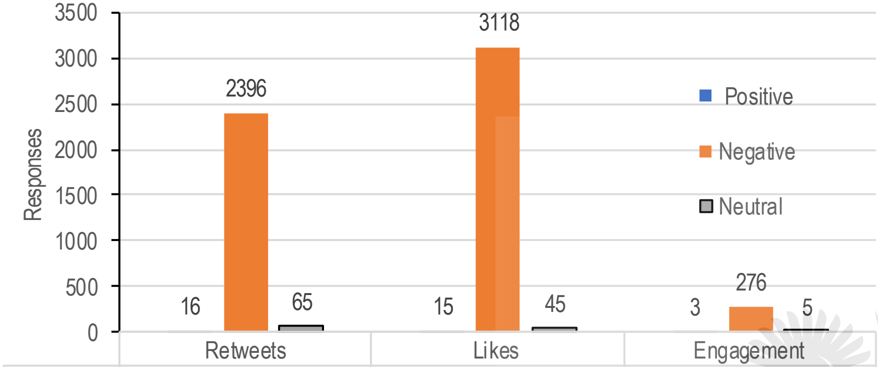

	Retweets	Likes	Engagement
Positive	16	15	3
Negative	2396	3118	276
Neutral	65	45	5

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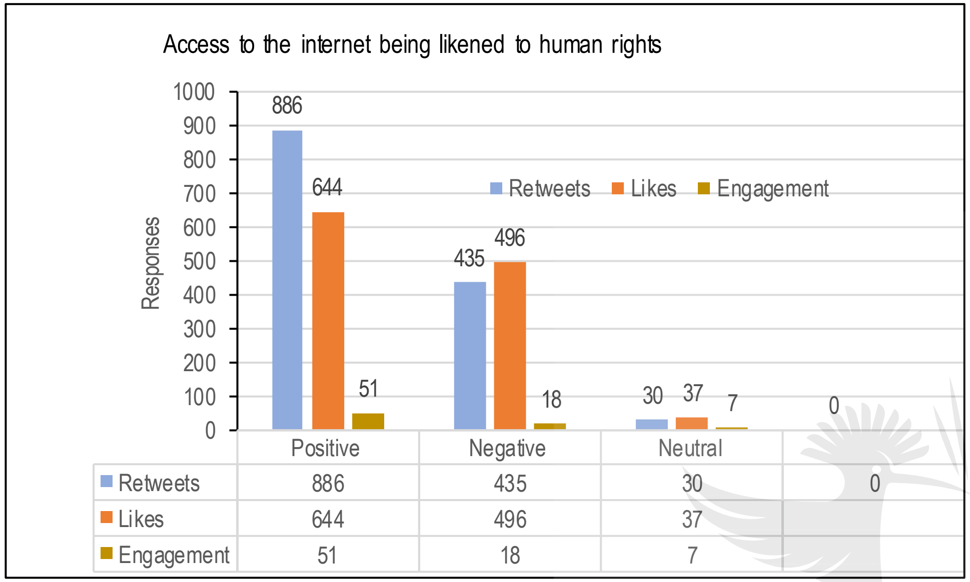

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	
Retweets	886	435	30	0
Likes	644	496	37	
Engagement	51	18	7	

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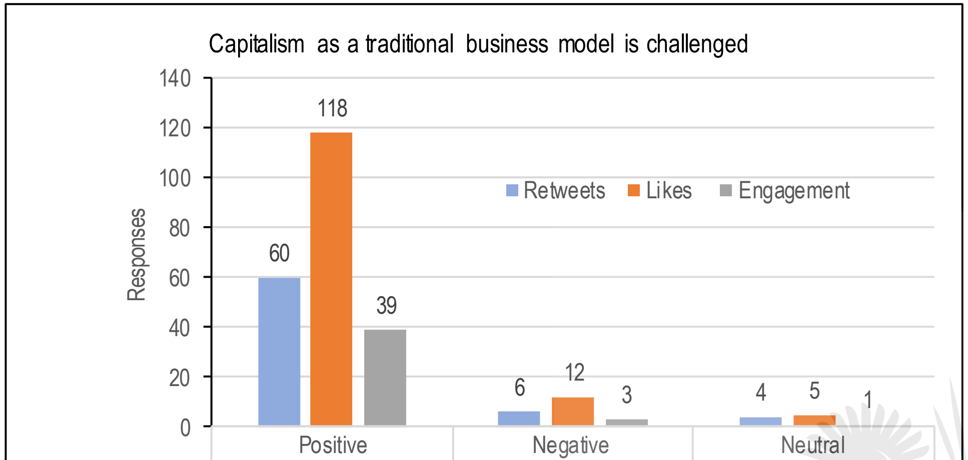

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	60	6	4
Likes	118	12	5
Engagement	39	3	1

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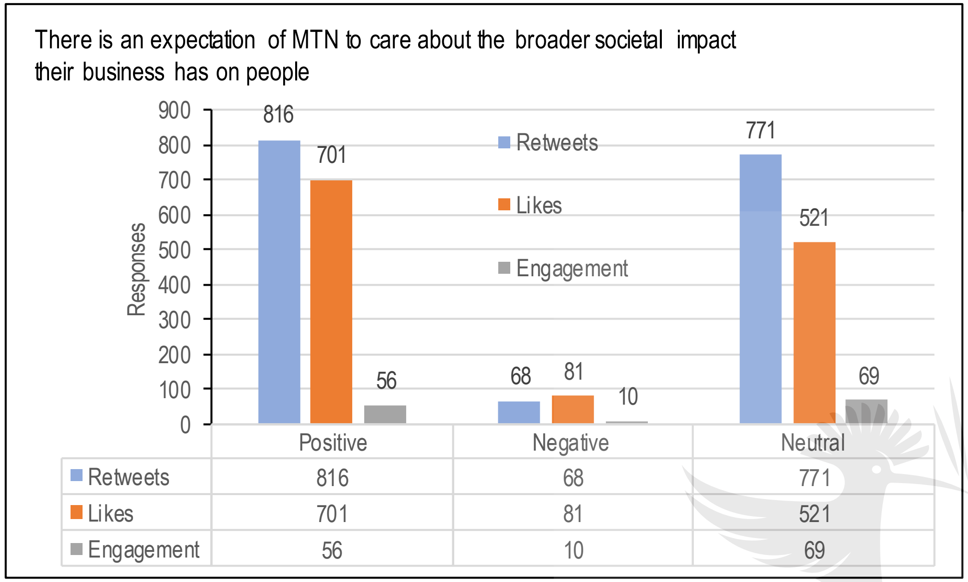

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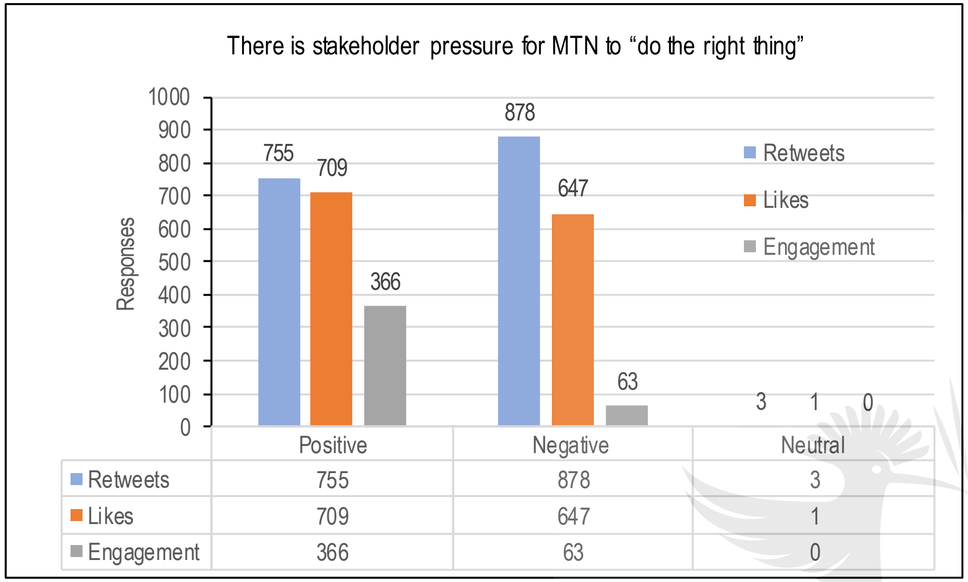

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	755	878	3
Likes	709	647	1
Engagement	366	63	0

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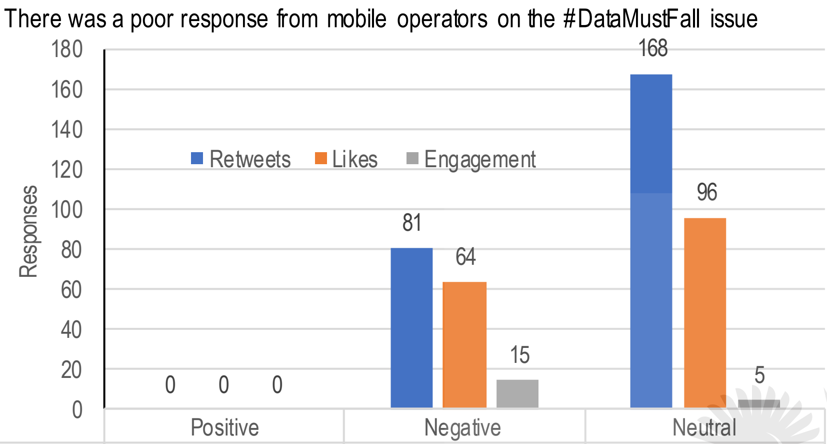

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	0	81	168
Likes	0	64	96
Engagement	0	15	5

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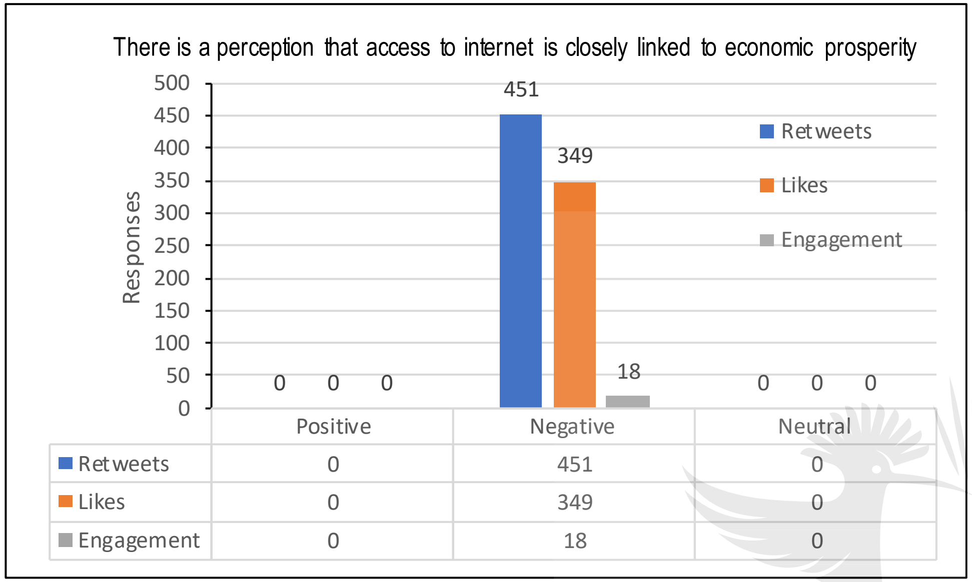

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	0	451	0
Likes	0	349	0
Engagement	0	18	0

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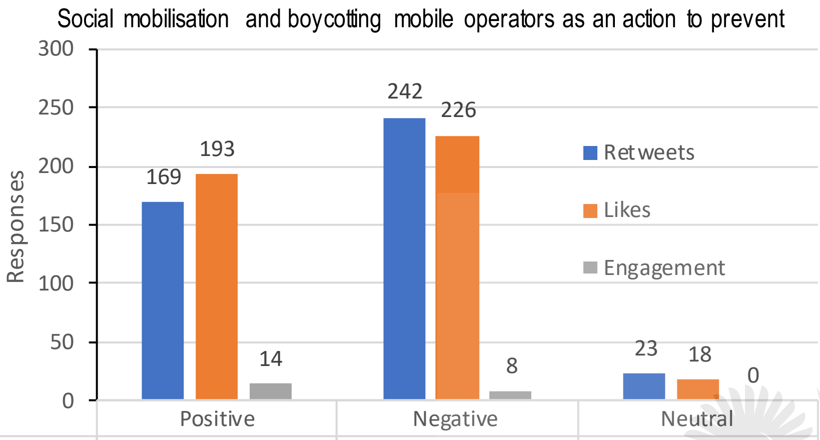

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Retweets	169	242	23
Likes	193	226	18
Engagement	14	8	0

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CODE BOOK									
No.	**Positive**	**Negative**	**Neutral**	**Retweets**	**Likes**	**Photography or footage**	**Engagement**	**Theme**	**Quote**
Tweet 1			Neutral Tweet	15	22	No image or footage	7 comments		Yes, #DataMustFall for the poor, but is already cheap for those buying bundles. @Afrihost promo now offers 50GB for R299 - less than 1c/MB.
Tweet 2	Positive tweet			60	118	Image attached	39 comments		**#DataMustFall** @Vodacom has announced that it'll provide free internet access for University students
Tweet 3		Negative		14	18	Image attached	11 Comments		Ready to weep into your coffee? A SIM card with UNCAPPED data for a week costs €7 (R100) in Finland. **#DataMustFall**
Tweet 4		Negative tweet		135	255	Image attached	15 comments		Mara We took 'BIS' for granted. Today we're Data Slaves. Imagine paying R60 a month for unlimited data. **#DataMustFall**
Tweet 5		Negative tweet		33	48	No image or footage	12 comments		During #DataMustFall campaign We thought @iamtbotouch will help but next thing he was bought by MTN. ^NG
Tweet 6				7	19	No image or footage	0 Comments		It's a 'norm', everyday between 18:30 and 23:30 network signal plays hide-and-seek. MTN is trash. MTN is Trash. MTN is TRASH. #DataMustFall
Tweet 7		Negative Tweet		3	2		0 comments		Feel that #DataMustFall in South Africa? ZA Sign this petition to force

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									the Competition Commission to act urgently: Tell the Competition Commission why Data Must Fall Action for Mzansi amandla.mobi
Tweet 8			Neutral tweet	4	5		1 comment		#DataMustFall: @Vodacom slashes cost of out-of-bundle data for all customers @busrep http://iol.io/bcfk0
Tweet 9		Negative tweet		23	39	Image:  	2 comments		Dear @Vodacom , 68% of our followers are Vodacom subscribers and they fully support the #DataMustFall Campaign. #OngaziMakazi
Tweet 10			Neutral tweet	3	1	None	No comments		@RIAnetwork Third study to probe #DataMustFall veracity http://itweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=165589&catid=147&o=eint&E=brademan%40researchictafrica.net#.WeDU770OkUw.twitter
Tweet 11		Negative tweets		3	10	None	4 comments		@NATALIEDELPORT South Africans should have a right to affordable and reliable access to the internet.

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Tweet 12		Negative tweets		29	68		2 comments		@LungstarBoy_SA #Vodacom Please Fellow South African People don't fall for this deal issa trap what we want is to buy 1GB at R25 That's all #DataMustFall
Tweet 13		Negative tweets		10	19	None	0 comments		@MzansiInsider **#DataMustFall** is a real movement. Let's hit the streets to find out what you had to say. #MzansiInsider
Tweet 14		Negative tweets		11	15	None	0 comments		@ ToutMedia Until the cost of internet data goes down, ecommerce ventures shall continue struggling. **#DataMustFall** #GainWithXtianDela #TrapaDrive
Tweet 15			Neutral tweet	94	24	None	5 comments		@ FifiPeters Everyone that believes **#datamustfall** in SA, go to http://compcom.co.za & state why.Submissions close on November 1 @cnbcafrica @CompComSA
Tweet 16		Negative tweets		121	123		25 comments		@ ThulaniThuswa Just brought 1GB data for only R14 in Morocco... #DataMustFall in Mzansi
Tweet 17		Negative		13	34		1 comment		@DrumMagazine **#DataMustFall**: R2K picketers call for cellphone companies to ring in the changes http://bit.ly/2hi9Ega

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Tweet 18		Negative tweet		26	25		None		@jefftalks_co_za **#DataMustFall**. 1G should be R20 and never expire. Don't treat us like fools
Tweet 19		Negative tweets		65	67	Image accompanies	4 comments		@AndImLee We will Protest Until Something Happens!! Good Morning Everyone!! #DataMustFall
Tweet 20	Positive			28	65		5 comments		@Zwelinzima1 SAFTU supports #DataMustFall's fight for lower costs – South African Federation of Trade Unions – SAFTU https://shar.es/1Vqg9N
Tweet 21		Negative tweet		121	149		10 comments		@mlota_azola In South Africa, 10 litres of petrol is cheaper than 1GB. Clearly we have a serious problem. #DataMustFall
Tweet 22		Negative tweet		28	37		No comments		@DenzilBvuma #DataMustFall this might be illegal buh if you want cheap and affordable data like and retweet this I'll DM you with instructions
Tweet 23		Negative tweet		18	29		12 comments		@mike_motsepo We been singing #DataMustFall 4 over a year now, they know it's a bluff. Let's stop buying airtime & data for a month. Rest will be history.

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Tweet 24		Negative tweet		30	65		10 Comments		@Nos_Luk MTN is the most expensive network provider la eMzansi only free twitter makes it appealing. **#DataMustFall**
Tweet 25		Negative tweets		341	728		30 Comments		@_JustProblem_ **#DataMustFall** The king has arrived Today there must be a change 1GB must be R30 on all social networks
Tweet 26		Negative		103	191		40 Comments		@Zwelinzima1 These guys are merciless when pursuing profits! Only difference with Zupta is that their looting is said to be legal. #DataMustFall
Tweet 27		Negative		6	12		1 Comments		@vukosi In Tanzania I just got a SIM with 4 GB data for a week for R17.40 (3000 TSH). Data has fallen here #datamustfall
Tweet 28		Negative		117	15		0 Comments		@_TheRealDJEx Are you gonna join us? #SocialMediaShutDown #ShutDownWednesday #DataMustFall
Tweet 29		Negative tweet		97	25		1 comments		@_TheRealDJEx We need a way forward on dis #DataMustFall We can't let it go til we get to d bottom of dis. Let's take it to the streets. Who's with me?
30		Negative tweets		11	7		0 comments		@na_sibanibani There are 2 types of people; those who act towards change AND those

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									who just criticise. **#DataMustFall** #SocialMediaBlackout
31	Positive			12	15	No image	3 Comments		@ MsLeloB Fully behind **#DataMustFall** & would support initiatives where I can use my voice for the cause. I don't believe #SocialMediaBlackOut is it.
32		Negative		170	274	None	17 comments		@ sunkardashian The disabling of background data is also a huge myth cause our data disappears even with that done. **#DataMustFall**
33		Negative		233	312		3 comments		@ justkholii #DataMustFall the high cost of data even impacts on the basic needs you buy.
34		Negative		148	217	None	20 comments		@ DJAnkletap Buying a 50mb data bundle for a flagship smartphone in 2017 is like putting R50 petrol in a ferrari! #DataMustFall
35		Negative		34	25	None	4 comments		@ ParliamentofRSA #PresidentZuma: Lowering of the cost of data #DataMustFall is uppermost in our plans #SONA2017
36			Neutral	34	53		40 comments		@ ProfJNMoyo What does #DataMustFall mean? Is it the data that must fall or it is its price that must fall?
37		Negative		163	188	None	33 comments		@ RealBlackCoffee #DataFalling @MTNza has joined the low data movement. 1 data Bundle is now R65 & 5 Gig is

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									R139 on night express...!!!!!! #datamustfall
38		Negative		57	44	None	4 comments		@ iamtbotouch Progress on **#DataMustFall** :we had a great meeting with @MTNza Executive Heads #siyanqoba details on #Touchdown at 3pm
39		Negative		25	17	None	2 comments		@ DjNewSouthAfric After 1994, instead of ending white corporate greed, our leaders were bribed with shares. Now black child is paying the price #DataMustFall
40		Negative		32	45		2 comments		@ Kefilweroro Vodacom is the worst of them all #DataMustFall
41		Negative		19	25	None	0 comments		@ sheila_tt12 I remember someone tweeting "I don't know whether to buy groceries or data" funny 😂😂😂 but a sad reality hence #DataMustFall
42		Negative		20	19	None	0 comments		@ uNtokozoDlamini And data shouldn't expire. Way pay money for data and then they expire. You're not being fair @CellC @MTNza @Vodacom #DataMustFall
43		Negative		12	11	None	1 Comments		@ _BlackZA South african youth lets 1976 on this networks #DataMustFall

									#SocialMediaBlackout #TheQueenMzansi #Uyangthandana
44		Negative		6	6	None	1 Comments		@ OagengTidikwe Network Operators are a law unto themselves & ICASA is a toothless bulldog. We're being ripped of. #DataMustFall @SakinaKamwendo #AMLIVE
45		Negative		17	12	None	2 comment		@ Arrndy It annoys me when we say #DataMustFall or #FeesMustFall & people start being economy analysts by saying its impossible bla bla ,like wazini?
46		Negative		20	29		3 comment		@ MichaelJordaan Of course #datamustfall and they will. In 2017.
47		Negative		8	7		1 Comment		@ RMaputla Move in with relatives or friends in a city that offers free wifi, searching for jobs on the net can be expensive #Datamustfall #JobAdviceSA
48		Negative		3	3		0 Comment		@ DrCorneDavis 24hrs left to sign #DataMustFall, can you help us reach 20,000 signatures? Sign here https://awethu.amandla.mobi/petitions/bring-the-cost-of-data-down?bucket=&source=twitter-share-button via @AmandlaMobi
49		Negative		23	13		0 Comment		@ NalediChirwa

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									To the privileged, privilege is common sense. How UP thinks online studying is a solution, especially after #DataMustFall baffles me.
50			Neutral	7	4		0 comments		@art2gee Yes, #DataMustFall, but a carpet-bomb approach won't benefit low-income users. My column in @GadgetZA : http://gadget.co.za/data-must-be-attacked-but-by-precision-strike/
51		Negative		42	56	None	10 Comments		@Our_DA ANC policy bungling keeps data costs high: http://bit.ly/2czcM8Y - @ShinnMarian #DataMustFall
52		Negative		47	42	None	5 Comments		#DataMustFall refuses to vanish, it's a serious issue and I dare say operators silence is rude, they have to change the status quo.
53		Negative		11	11		2 Comments		Imagine if the bank said "your balance is R1320.... It is valid until 30 September 2016! But I pay for data but it expires... #datamustfall
54			Neutral	65	45	None	5 comments		@iamtbotouch My message to all the networks this morning Genesis 47:26-27 #datamustfall
55			Neutral	16	14	None	0 comments		@ dee1910 I must support #datamustfall. What is there to expire? If I paid for it, I

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									want to use it whenever I want to. Regulators change the rules!
56		Negative		34	22	None	10 Comments		@ HlomlaDandala How does SA suffer these kinds of mobile data prices? Kanti what is the Minister of Communication doing? #datamustfall
57		Negative		11	5	None	0 Comments		@ MediaMattersZA High data costs contribute towards inequality and the digital divide between the haves and the haves not. #datamustfall @mybroadband
58		Negative		6	6	None	0 Comments		@ Pasco_e FACT: The CEO's of all telecom service providers in SA have to be "approved" by the ANC so they can feed the dragon. #DataMustFall
59				10	8	None	0 Comments		@ ForeverShakes Dissolve ICASA because clearly they've failed to execute their duties #datamustfall
60			Neutral	346	241		15 Comments		@ RebaMokgoko There's an easy solution to this: Create a data package equivalent to BIS but for all mobile phones. @MTNza @Vodacom @CellC #DataMustFall

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61		Negative		14	8		0 Comments		Corporate thieves in Midrand, Woodmead, Centurion and 14th Avenue are complicit in the scam to steal our money! Therefore #DataMustFall
62		Negative		102	57		5 Comments		South African entrepreneur @iamtbotouch ignites campaign to lower data costs http://bbc.in/2cTcchP #datamustfall
63	Positive			249	253		12 comments		I fully, without reservation support #DataMustFall campaign @iamtbotouch
64	Positive			755	709		366 comments		@ EFFSouthAfrica We support the #DataMustFall campaign because telecommunications is a basic right like education and health. It impacts on development
65		Negative		54	65		2 comments		@ MpumiMbethe You know you're being ripped off day and night when your #data runs out faster than your phone's battery life. #datamustfall
66		Negative		7	11		0 comments		@ Dclantis I just realised that I haven't joined the #datamustfall we truly are being mugged by these networks.
67		Negative		101	34		4 Comments		@Kay_OhYeah Its Lunch time ... Now I must decide whether to buy food or data ?? 😮😓 #datamustfall
68	Positive			567	448		44 Comments		@ iamtbotouch We are making progress I just got off the phone with Chair of Icasa Mr

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									Mohlaloga, he promised a meeting this week #datamustfall
69		Negative		272	177		7 Comments		@ Dj_Bongz Data prices in SA just prove that big companies don't give a sh*t about the state of the economy n da poor what a shame #DataMustFall
70		Negative		392	325		29 Comments		@ JustBeeKayM MTN is the worst. They even reserve your airtime for data without your permission😟😟 #datamustfall
72			Neutral	391	227		14 Comments		@ Sheldon_Cameron It's not rocket science. All networks should just offer a Twitter bundle that will last for 30 days. Problem solved. Finish! #datamustfall
73		Negative		137	148	None	0 comments		@ lurvDayimani Vodacom is a problem , BIGGEST SYNDICATE, FRAUD !!!!!!!!! #datamustfall
74		Negative		10	19	None			@ MzansiInsider #DataMustFall is a real movement. Let's hit the streets to find out what you had to say. #MzansiInsider
75			Neutral	15	15	None	0 comments		@ Artii_M Cliff: Very poor people in SA also prioritize data like any other person. #DataMustFall
76		Negative		84	33	None	5 comments		@ Bradleoy

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									After we succeed with #DataMustFall we must look at DSTV prices.
77		Negative		9	3	None	1 Comments		@ khutso What is happening between MTN,vodacom and cell c is price fixing. This is no coincidence,they met and decided on this #datamustfall
78		Negative		45	18	None	2 Comments		@ SAYoungLion Our network operators provide us with slow network yet expensive. We've been taken for a ride for a long time, it ends here #DataMustFall
79		Negative		39	37		12 Comments		@ Unathi_Kwaza As if data wasn't expensive enough,our sharks of cellphone service providers have the audacity to steal it back after 30 days. #datamustfall
80		Negative		4	10				@ blessingmpofu Hey #SouthAfrica @DataMustFall is one initiative we should get behind. We'll all be better for it #DataMustFall
81		Negative		10	3	None	2 Comments		@ BennyMathebula What in the world gives @MTNza the right to reserve my airtime for data. Can't make calls whereas I have money. I'm frustrated #datamustfall
82	Positive			16	15	None	3 Comments		@ BigDaddyLiberty

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									It's important that the #DataMustFall campaign remain strong. Don't let the big networks & their bosom buddies in govt think we're playing!
83		Negative		89	95		4 Comments		@ SocialSA How are we supposed to download & watch and show any form of online support to our local artists when data is so expensive? #DataMustFall ✊
84		Negative		43	48		1 Comments		@ LindileSifile I suffer from Dataphobia - the fear of checking your data balance. #datamustfall
85		Negative		173	205		19 Comments		@ Billal_Mabuza #datamustfall How do you expect me use the 15GB night express data?... And give me only 2GB during the day? I'm not an owl
86		Negative		33	35		5 Comments		@ hlaoivan #datamustfall must just fall nje....before our sisters sell their bodies for data
87		Negative		48	55		3 Comments		@ TweepFlow I almost got hospitalised for heart attack one morning after realising i forgot to switch off data the night before. #datamustfall
88		Negative		60	83		5 Comments		@ Skoax

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									The next revolution after #DataMustFall is #MultiChoiceMustFall
89			Nuetral	158	88	None	5 Comments		@ Radio702 Hey @MTNza @Vodacom @CellC #datamustfall is demanding lower prices. What do you say? Read here for more: http://bit.ly/2cKvcmo
90	Positive			740	494		43 Comments		@ iamtbotouch It's going to take ordinary ppl like you and I to achieve the success of this campaign! All networks you have 29 days left #datamustfall
91		Negative		100	53	None	2 Comments		@ SandileM_ Calculating how much Money on Data you've spent a month - you'd really rather be spending it on food ☺ #DataMustFall
92		Negative		18	37		2 Comments		@ BigDaddyLiberty South Africans are undergoing a free-market awakening of sorts with #DataMustFall! Why does govt protect the COLLUSION of major networks?
93		Negative		35	50	None	2 Comments		@ sirphala I think MTN is the worst in DATA charges, once u recharge they send u

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									4sms to thank u, REALLY? Mxm u must all fall #datamustfall
94	Positivity			134	135	None	4 Comments		@ JoubertBotha Connectivity is a basic human right. #datamustfall
95		Negative		321	280		13 Comments		@ Sia_Nkuna Vodacom is so used to stealing data. You'll get that "your data bundle has depleted" text, while using free Wi-Fi #datamustfall
96		Negative		145	119		10 Comments		@ Khoolfella_ Data is said to become a basic necessity like water and electricity so government please step in.... #datamustfall
97		Negative		23	21	None	2 Comments		@ LeKing_Ike I don't remember the last time I bought launch at school, I spend all that money data #datamustfall #dataHasToFall
98		Negative		16	18	None	2 Comments		@ Aey_dear South African data rates Crazy ! #DataMustFall #TouchCentral
99		Negative		4	3	None	0 Comments		@ TeejayJanett #datamustfall @iamtbotouch yes Iam that somebody rite now am surviving on wi fi at work as soon as am gone am lost on everything
100	Positive			141	128	None	9 Comments		@ iamtbotouch #Datamustfall Let's bring the price down @iamdbanj supports the campaign

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Calculations:

10 Positive tweets

73 Negative

12 Neutral

8751 Retweets

8566 Likes

1052 Comments

Themes:

Theme 1: 33

Theme 2: 13

Theme 3: 6

Theme 4: 8

Theme 5: 13

Theme 6: 4

Theme 7: 10

Theme 8: 13

Total tweets 100

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